BROWNLOW NORTH

RECORDS AND RECOLLECTIONS

K. MOODY-STUART

Tf 316



Yours faithfully and gratefully
Brownlow North.

BROWNLOW NORTH,

B.A., OXON:

RECORDS AND RECOLLECTIONS.

BY THE REV.

KENNETH MOODY-STUART, M.A.,

MOFFAT.

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Henriette ... from her Sister Maria
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PREFACE.

WHEN asked by Mr. James Balfour, Edinburgh, and Mr. James E. Mathieson, London, to undertake the compilation of a memoir of their beloved friend, Mr. Brownlow North, I agreed to do so only on discovering that if I refused it seemed unlikely that the work would be done at all. A considerable time had already elapsed since Mr. North's decease, and I had understood that another friend was engaged in executing the work; but this proved to be a mistake. In these circumstances, however much I would have preferred to have seen the task entrusted to the fitter hands of one of Mr. North's own contemporaries and intimate friends, I felt it my duty not to decline it. The kindness and able assistance of the two gentlemen already named, as well as of others who shared a similar intimacy with Mr. North, have, by the very full personal reminiscences which they have furnished for the volume, relieved me from much of the responsibility from which I shrank. The extent of these contributions by different friends must, no doubt, in

some degree interfere with the unity of the book as a composition; but, on the other hand, they greatly add to its value, both as having been penned by more competent hands than mine, and as giving the reader a truer portrait of the subject of this Memorial Volume than could be presented by any likeness drawn by a single writer.

For a memoir compiled on this plan, the author can adduce at least one precedent of the olden time, and shield himself under no less authority than that of Richard Baxter, who in publishing a biography of his friend the Rev. Joseph Alleine, describes and defends his work in sentences that apply exactly to the present sketch. He says: "This history is not drawn up by one hand, but is the brief account of the several parts of his life, drawn up by several of his most worthy and most judicious friends that were present, or were most intimate and familiar with him. And I take this to be the best advantage to a history, as to the truth which should satisfy the incredulous, though not as to uniformity and a fluid style which might please the curious. For a man's life is like a war or battle. No dispersed war, no, nor any particular battle, can be fully described by the observations of any one man alone; but one man is but in one place, and seeth only that which is within his own prospect, which his proper station

did advantage him to see. But when intelligent men from each part of the army do every one bring in their several narratives, all set together may be a satisfactory history of the whole war or fight. Therefore, though, by variety of style, this history may seem a *cento*, or incongruously composed ; yet truth being the soul of history, that's best which is best fitted to the lovers of truth." The memoir in question indeed went much further in this direction than the volume in the reader's hands, each chapter having been composed by a separate contributor.

This volume does not profess to be a biography strictly so called ; but rather a record of Mr. North's work. On this account the chronological order has not been adhered to except in the opening chapters, and those at the close. Elsewhere the arrangement is topical ; but, as the dates are always inserted when known, the reader can for himself refer each letter or incident to its own year.

On account also of the special aim of the book being to describe his work, and the character of his teaching, and its results, I have inserted only letters of a religious nature, or have confined the extracts from his general correspondence to portions which bear upon his labours, or his religious experience and counsels. It is right to state this distinctly, so that no reader may imagine that Mr. North's

whole correspondence was of this cast. Indeed, his letters are usually short affectionate notes, and though all appear to have some reference to Divine things, and the work which lay next his heart, few of them are so entirely devoted to these subjects as those transcribed in chapter viii.

Besides the friends already named, the thanks of the compiler of this volume, for kind assistance given, are tendered to Mrs. North; Charles Augustus North, Esq., London; the Rev. A Moody-Stuart, D.D., Edinburgh; Francis Brown-Douglas, Esq., Edinburgh; Miss Gordon, Senior of Wardhouse; Admiral Baillie Hamilton; the Right Hon. the Earl of Kintore; the Rev. William Robertson, D.D., Edinburgh; the Rev. Walter Ross Taylor, Glasgow; William Gall, Esq., Elgin; the Rev. A. Lind, Elgin; the Rev. Charles G. Scott, Edinburgh; the Rev. Henry M. Williamson, Belfast; the Rev. Fergus Ferguson, Glasgow; W. T. McAuslane, Esq., Glasgow; the Right Hon. the Dowager-Countess of Aberdeen; the Rev. W. P. Mackay, Hull; Miss Christie, of Durie; Miss Heriot Maitland, of Ramornie; Mrs. Campbell, of Tullichewan; the Right Hon. Lord Polwarth; and a few others who have requested that their names should not be mentioned. The contributions of each of these are acknowledged as they are successively inserted. The author also tenders his thanks to those friends who

have kindly permitted him to publish their letters, or those of their deceased relatives, describing their personal spiritual experience. In cases where it was hopeless to trace the writers after a long lapse of years, the names or correct initials have been suppressed, and the place supplied by the earlier letters of the alphabet in order. The same rule has been followed where, in inserting communications from others, reference is made to the cases of individuals who would naturally not desire that their names should be indicated.

The author would also take this opportunity of expressing his obligations to the newspaper press, for the faithful reports and discriminating and able criticisms of Mr. North's public appearances, which from time to time were given in their columns, and from which frequent quotations have been made in these pages. The writing, even in our provincial journals, must be of a high order, which can thus be republished for a permanent record twenty years after it met the perhaps cursory glance of the readers of the morning's news.

This record of Brownlow North's words and work is now given to the public, with the prayer that it may prove a means of building up in their most holy faith many of those who were awakened, quickened, or edified under his ministry. The

author also requests those who valued Mr. North for the sake of his labours and of his Master, to unite with him in petitioning that it may prove a means of communicating saving blessing to some who never heard the gospel message from his lips, so that by it, as well as by his published works, he being dead may yet speak.

KENNETH MOODY-STUART.

Moffat, Oct. 1878.

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BROWNLOW NORTH'S EARLIER YEARS.

31

"I loved Thee late, though early I well knew
From saintly mother what to Thee was due ;
And such a mother—following her child
From home, to cities where in riot wild
I lived, and sometimes prayed without a vow,
'Lord, give me purity, but give not now !'

"I loved Thee late, Lord, after shameful years
Of strife, waged hard between desires and fears ;
Thy word now checked me ; now my will gave rein
To lusts that drew me deep in vice again.
O patience wonderful ! Thou didst not hate
The lingering heart of him who loved Thee late."

PROF. W. M. BLACKBURN ON ST. AUGUSTINE.

"In time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."—EPH. ii. 2.

I.

BROWNLOW NORTH is a name that has become a household word throughout the length and breadth of Scotland, and also in many of the cities and towns of England and Ireland. It is a name which will be held in grateful remembrance and esteem by a large portion of the present generation of Scottish Christian people, as that of a man who has influenced by his preaching and teaching the spiritual life of our land more than most have done. It seems therefore unfitting that such a man's life should be allowed to become a thing of the past without some permanent record being preserved of those labours in which he was so unwearied, of that teaching which made such a deep impression upon multitudes, and of that evangelistic ministry which has formed one of the most important factors of the religious, as distinguished from the ecclesiastical, history of Scotland in the present generation.

Brownlow North was born on the 6th January, 1810. He was the only son of the Rev. Charles Augustus North, Rector of Alverstoke, Hants, and Prebendary of Winchester, and of Rachel, daughter of Thomas Jarvis, Esq., of Alverstoke House, Hants. His

grandfather was the Hon. and Rev. Brownlow North, D.D., Prelate of the Noble Order of the Garter, who was successively bishop of the sees of Lichfield, of Worcester, and Winchester. Mr. North was thus a grand-nephew of Lord North, the celebrated prime minister of George III., not a little of whose characteristic ability and genius, along with that of other members of the distinguished family to which he belonged, reappeared in him. It is a family which has produced members who have exercised an appreciable influence on the community both in Church and State.

His birth took place at Winchester House, Chelsea, the town house of his grandfather. His father was the Bishop's youngest son; but as his cousin, the Earl of Guilford, had no son, and his elder brother Francis had been long married, and was also childless, the infant boy was welcomed as heir to the earldom, and hearty were the cheers which greeted him, when Christian Schetky, the well-known marine painter,* and his father's intimate companion and friend, receiving him from the nurse's arms at breakfast, presented him to the company as the future Earl of Guilford. It was these expectations which prevented his being trained for any of the professions,

* Schetky when a young man in Rome received the blessing of Cardinal York, the brother of Prince Charles Stuart, and died within a year of Brownlow North, at the age of ninety-six. Their interview thus unites dates so distant as the battle of Culloden and the death of David Livingstone.

and which thus, as in many similar cases, eventually proved a disadvantage to him.

The little boy throve apace, and a story which is told of him when he was about five years old, gives evidence of his natural quickness of mind. Walking with his aunt, Lady Lucy North, in the park, where the deer were lying lazily basking and browsing, he said to her, after some minutes' silence, "Aunt Lucy, why are you like that big stag there?" "I'm sure I can't tell," replied his aunt. "I don't think I'm a bit like. Tell me why." "Because, Aunt Lucy, you're a great dear." To dive to the depths of a long pocket, and extract half-a-crown, was the quick rejoinder of his aunt to his *jeu de mot,* and afterwards, with much praise of his cleverness and affection, she related the story as it has since been preserved in the family.

At the early age of nine he went to Eton, when Dr. Keats was headmaster, and remained there six years, in Dr. Hawtrey's house. He did not distinguish himself there by application to his books, but was known as a first-rate swimmer and general good fellow by the soubriquet of Gentleman Jack, in contradistinction to a bargee of his name, with whom the Eton boys of that time were familiar. The prayers and pious training of his mother, who was a most godly woman, bore as yet no fruit in the wild and wayward character of her boy, who was strongly averse to all that was good, his influence upon his schoolfellows being exactly the reverse of

what she would have desired. His father dying in 1825, young Brownlow was removed from Eton, and went out to Corfu with his cousin, Lord Guilford, who was Chancellor of the Ionian Islands, where he had founded a Theological College, in which it was hoped his young relative might be induced to continue his studies. Nothing, however, seemed able to subdue the wild, high spirits of the lad; and the old gentleman, after finding one day that the window of his class room had been made the winning post and last jump of an amateur steeplechase, which Brownlow had got up, regretfully sent him home again, as beyond his control. He was then sent abroad with a tutor, to make, as it was then termed, the grand tour; but this experiment proved no more fortunate than the preceding, for meeting with his tutor in a gaming saloon the first night after their arrival in Paris, he insisted, under penalty of exposure, that all the books they had brought with them should be left behind at Paris, as unnecessary incumbrances, and then afterwards, on the journey to Rome, won from the miserable tutor at ecarté all the money with which he had been entrusted to defray the expenses of the tour, so that their position became completely reversed; the pupil was now master, and the tutor only tolerated as a useful and humble companion.*

* It may be mentioned as not unworthy to rank along with other remarkable instances of Divine grace recorded in this volume, that this tutor, who must have had such a bad influence upon his pupil, at a later period gave every evidence of true penitence, and of being renewed in Christ Jesus.

On returning from the Continent he joined his mother, who had gone to live at Cheltenham. Here for a time he thoroughly enjoyed himself; for he was at that age, seventeen, very fond of dancing and riding, and both pleasures were here to his hand in perfection. So great an impression did he make upon his fair partners, that he proposed to no less than nineteen in one winter, and was accepted by them all! His fond mother had at first considerable difficulty, and felt no little embarrassment in satisfying the expectant mothers-in-law of a future earl, that her son was quite a boy, and that nothing serious could be entertained; but after a few similar situations her replies almost formulated themselves, and it was with difficulty at last that she could refrain from yielding to a strong desire to laugh at the extraordinary absurdity of the whole thing.

His propensity for riding, which developed itself in racing up and down the promenade, a long straight boulevard, which those who know Cheltenham will recollect, had well-nigh brought him to his end, had not a merciful Providence watched over him and interfered to save his life. He was racing with one of his companions, and had just been successful, when his rival challenged him again to another contest, but stipulated they should change sides of the road, owing to some fancied advantage the right side possessed over the left. It was agreed to, and they started at full speed, when, unfortunately, coming down the hill round the corner where now stands the

Queen's Hotel, there appeared a travelling carriage and pair of posters. To avoid a collision was impossible, and the horse and rider on the right-hand side went straight into the body of the carriage. The rider was thrown over the top, and taken up senseless, and afterwards died; the horse was so injured, he had to be immediately destroyed. This melancholy event made Cheltenham no longer agreeable to him; and as he had made the acquaintance during the winter of several Irish families who had come there for the season, and who had pressed him to go and see them in Ireland in the summer, and as he was intimate with some of the officers of the regiment then quartered at Galway, he determined to cross the Channel, and try the attractions of the Emerald Isle. These proved too much for him; for the daughter of a highly esteemed Protestant clergyman so captivated him, that he induced her to give him her hand, and was married to Grace Anne, second daughter of the Rev. Thomas Coffey, D.D., of Galway, on the 12th of December, 1828, before he had completed his nineteenth year. On the 12th of December this year (1878), Mr. North would have completed fifty years of wedded life, and those who knew him may remember how he looked forward to celebrating his "golden" wedding. The issue of his marriage was three sons, Charles Augustus, Brownlow who predeceased his father, and Frederic who died in early childhood.

About this period however, great, and to him most important, changes had taken place in the circle

of his relations. His kind old friend and cousin had died, and been succeeded in the earldom by his uncle Francis, his father's eldest brother. Naturally an austere man, he had no sympathy with the youthful extravagances of his nephew, and when the death of his wife took place, after nearly thirty years of wedded life, he told him he should marry again. He was as good as his word, and marrying a lady some twenty-five years his junior, he became the father of a family, and though his eldest son did not live to succeed him, his grandson now perpetuates the name, Dudley Francis, 7th Earl of Guilford.

His expectations being thus doomed to disappointment, and his young wife having borne him two sons, the question as to the maintenance of himself and them asserted itself persistently and painfully. His sole income was derived from his fees as registrar of the diocese of Winchester and Surrey, to which office he had been appointed when quite young by his grandfather, the bishop. His work was done by two local solicitors, who paid him a yearly allowance, and retained the balance of the fees for their services. At that time he was in receipt of about £300 per annum,* a sum quite insufficient for his habits; so to improve his finances he had recourse to the gaming-table, with such bad success

* The very moderate renumeration derived from this post was all that he ever inherited in the way of means, a fact which it is right to state, as many had the erroneous idea that he was possessed of a considerable private fortune, and judged him by this mistaken standard.

that he lost a much larger sum than he could possibly pay; upon which he left England for Boulogne, taking his wife and children with him. Here again for some time he amused himself as before; but finding his funds running low, and wishing for fresh excitement, he sent his wife and children home to his mother, and started off himself as a volunteer for Don Pedro's army in Portugal. His mother received his wife and her two children, adopted the eldest, who was called Charles Augustus after her husband, and Mrs. North returned for a time to her old home in Ireland. After an interval of several months, Don Pedro's affair being settled, the prodigal returned home, to be forgiven; and in the summer of 1835 we find him going down to Scotland with his brother-in-law, Mr. Hayward, who had taken Abergeldie Castle for the shooting for that year. His wife and two younger children accompanied him; and from that time till his death, with only one interval of any importance, Scotland was the land of his adoption, in it was the home of his choice. Thus, though an Englishman by birth and education, he became almost a naturalised Scotchman, and was greatly attached to the country, and thoroughly conversant with the habits of thought of the people, whom he was destined afterwards to move so deeply and widely to concern about their eternal interests. But as yet his own thoughts and pursuits were running in wholly different channels.

Brownlow North, for the greater part of the next

four years, remained in Aberdeenshire, taking a shooting during the season, and wintering in Aberdeen. It was then that he made his match with Captain Barclay of Ury, whom he had ridden over to see from Aberdeen, in so short a space of time, as he said, that the captain declared it impossible. "Do you call that impossible?" said Mr. North; "I will engage to ride from Aberdeen to Huntly and back at the same rate, that is, eighty miles in eight hours." Captain Barclay replied, "I still say it is impossible; and I will make you a wager of £50 you can't do it." North at once accepted the bet, and the match was settled to come off as soon as could be conveniently arranged. Of course in Aberdeen the coming event was freely talked over, the opinion being pretty general that Mr. North had overrated his own powers and those of the Aberdeen horses. So much so, that at a dinner shortly previous to the match, a young barrister said he was a fool for attempting it, and had much better pay forfeit. "A fool you think me!" Mr. North rejoined: "so far do I differ from your opinion, that I will back myself not only to win my match with Captain Barclay, but to do the same feat over again the next day, and win my match with you." The company were astonished; the second match was made. Mr. North rode the eighty miles on three Aberdeen hacks, in hard snow and frost, danced all night at a ball afterwards, and rode and won the second match the following day.

There was another story told about him when shoot-

ing over the Huntly moors. Application was made to him one day by a young fellow, half-poacher, half-shepherd, to be allowed to go out with him on the hill, as he had heard that he was a most "tremendous" walker, and that he could find no person who could walk with him, and he should like to try himself what he could do. Mr. North said, "Very well. Meet me to-morrow morning at such a place, and I shall be glad of your company for the day." The man came, and walked from six in the morning till sundown. Mr. North never used to rest for luncheon then. He came the next day, and the third day, when, after a bad day's sport, birds being wild and scarce, on the road home a covey of grouse rose at the foot of a hill, and flew some way up the side of it. Turning to his companion, Mr. North said, "I shall have a try after those fellows." The man looked at him, saw that he was going, sat down on a stone, and cried like a child. He was beat. He never came out any more. Mr. North certainly was a most untiring sportsman in those days. Every day and all day was his motto, and though never quite in the class of first-rate shots, he was a very good one, and long had a challenge unaccepted, to shoot a match for a month against any man, over two brace of dogs with one gun. In Glenbucket in six weeks, in one season, he had killed over 970 brace of grouse to his own gun.

It must not be imagined that throughout the course of his gay, pleasure-seeking, and ungodly youth he

had no upbraidings of conscience, no strivings of the Holy Spirit, and no seasons when he resolved to forsake living for self and sin, and to seek the Lord. On the contrary, like most persons who have been trained to pray at a mother's knee, he was, during his early life, the subject of deep religious impression. In his childhood his mind had been stored by her with Divine truth, so that even at an early age he had a correct knowledge of the leading truths of the Gospel of Christ; and this, although long overlaid and apparently dead and buried, was yet to spring up in due time, and bring forth much fruit, so that she who sowed, and he who reaped, rejoiced together. These impressions more than once awakened in the bosom of Christian friends the hope that he was yielding himself to the Spirit's teaching, and to subjection to the Saviour; but, alas! his good resolutions proved but as flaxen cords or green withes to bind the Samson-like force of his old nature; and when temptation came upon him, they were broken as a thread of tow at the touch of the fire, and all his professions and fair promise of amendment turned out, although not insincere at the time, to be as the morning cloud or the early dew, that goeth away. They were fair, but fading and fruitless.

The cause of the deepest religious impression with which he was visited, previous to his final awakening and conversion, was a conversation which the late eminently godly Duchess of Gordon had with him at the dinner-table at Huntly Lodge.

The following account of this incident was given by her Grace to her friend and pastor, the Rev. H. M. Williamson: "He was staying in Huntly, engaged in shooting, and utterly careless and ungodly. Some friends of his wrote to me, asking me to take some notice of him, with the view to withdrawing him from his evil ways and companionships. I promised to do so, and gave him an invitation to dinner. When we were at dinner, he sat beside me, and suddenly said to me with much gravity, 'Duchess, what should a man do who has often prayed to God and never been answered?' I lifted up my heart to God to teach me what to say. I looked him quietly in the face, and said, so as not to be overheard by others, 'Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts' (James iv. 3). His countenance changed, he became very greatly moved, was very quiet during the evening, and thanked me ere he left."

Not long after this his heart was further softened and impressed by the dangerous illness of his second son, Brownlow, to whom he was much attached, and by perusing a little book which the Duchess of Gordon had given Mrs. North to read to her sick child. So deep and apparently hopeful was this impression, that he determined to change entirely his mode of life, and study at Oxford, and take a degree with a view to entering the English Church. Those who have followed Mr. North's career hitherto can imagine what force of character, what energy and

perseverance it required to undertake and carry out such a programme. And as far as depended upon himself he did so. He came to Cheltenham, consulted with his friend Frederic Robertson (afterwards of Brighton), who was at that time an undergraduate at Oxford, and by his advice matriculated at Magdalen Hall as a Gentleman Commoner. He actually did not know his Greek alphabet when he began his self-imposed task; but such was the power of his memory, so great his capacity for application, that, coupled with no ordinary natural talent, he passed both his "little go" and "great go" examinations with credit, and his Tutor, Dr. Jacobson, the present Bishop of Chester, gave it as his opinion that had he entered into the honour schools, and read for them, with the powers he had shown he would have taken a fair class.

Among his contemporaries at Oxford was the present Primate of England, who in Brownlow North's later days, when he was preaching as an evangelist in London, received him at Lambeth Palace, and had pleasure in recalling with him their college days. For a considerable time after entering Oxford he corresponded regularly with the Duchess of Gordon, who had also written to some of her friends to look after him there. When he was almost ready for ordination, and had got the promise of a curacy at Olney, the bishop was made acquainted by an anonymous letter with some of the excesses of his early years; but though this might have prevented

or at least delayed his ordination, Brownlow North seems to have felt, when it was fairly put to him, that the present state of his heart also rendered him unfit for the holy office of the ministry; for he afterwards told his friend the Duchess of Gordon that at a private interview the bishop said to him, "Mr. North, if I were in your position, and you in mine, would you ordain me?" to which he candidly replied, "My Lord, I would not."

In answer to some interrogations from Mr. Williamson, then minister of the Free Church, Huntly, now of Belfast, Mr. North said, that at this time he had been truly and thoroughly awakened, that he had a horrible sense of the demerit of his sins, and of the wrath of God justly due to them, and really purposed to depart from them and turn to God, and did so for a time in outward act. But, he added, "I never apprehended Christ, I never accepted Him as my sin-bearer and my righteousness."

To a Christian lady, a very old friend of his, Miss Gordon, senior, of Wardhouse, who knew him intimately both before and after his conversion, he said, when questioned by her about this period of awakening, and at the time of hopeful impression which took place after she knew him: "The house was swept and garnished, but *empty*, and the last state of that man was worse than the first. Think of the love of Jesus in coming to me after that!"

While he did not enter the Church as he intended to do on going to Oxford, the course of studies

which he pursued with that view proved eventually of the greatest advantage to him as a mental discipline, and as furnishing him with that acquaintance with the evidences of revealed religion which he afterwards displayed, as well as with the other branches of an Arts curriculum, and enabled the Free Church of Scotland, without departing widely from her ordinary procedure, to recognise him publicly as a preacher of the gospel.

We have thought it right to recount thus fully the sad history of this period of spiritual impression, of good resolutions, and temporary reformation, to which Mr. North freely referred in private to his friends, not to lead any to think lightly of the great sin of grieving the Spirit of God, but while warning them of the danger of so doing, duly to magnify the greatness of that Divine grace which afterwards laid hold on one who had so grievously resisted His strivings, and had so backslidden when he was almost within the kingdom. There is also a close connection between his own experience at this period and his subsequent religious history and teaching of others ; while this also explains to some extent, taken along with his mother's training, how it was that he possessed such a full and clear knowledge of the way of salvation, and the main doctrines of Scripture, as to be able within about a year of his saving change to address meetings, without falling into any doctrinal errors which he might afterwards have had to retract.

After this he threw himself openly into his old life of pleasure and of sin. He forgot God days without number, and wished that God would forget him. In 1845 he again took moors in Scotland, this time in Invernessshire, when he resided at Glen Spean for three years—afterwards at Dalmally in Argyleshire, when his second son Brownlow married Miss McDonald Macalister, of Inistrynich. Mr. North lived to see them both die before him, and it is in her grave that his body now rests. In 1850 he took Dallas moors, and made that house his residence. His influence and example upon his friends and associates, and upon the whole neighbourhood of his residence, was very pernicious. To a large extent he cast off even that form of godliness which many worldly and ungodly persons retain out of deference to the feelings of the religious portion of the community. The Rev. W. Bathgate, Congregational minister at Forres, when he saw the streets thronged with eager crowds going to hear Brownlow North preach, said to a friend, that he could not but recall the Sabbath mornings when at the same hour as the worshippers were flocking to the house of God, he had seen him drive in his dog-cart through these streets, with rod and basket slung behind him, going to spend the day in fishing upon the Findhorn. In his public addresses he acknowledged to the full the evil of his course of pleasure-seeking, irreligion, and sin. At the same time, lest the terms of harsh self-condemnation which he used in speaking of his life,

and which were not over-drawn, should he misunderstood by any, it is only right to give the testimony of one who knew him for many years when he was lessee of a moor in his neighbourhood. The Rev. John Macintyre, parish minister of Killmonivaig, in Lochaber, writes, that "while an eager sportsman, he seemed to derive pleasure in promoting the material good of his fellow-creatures. Just and honourable in his dealings as he always was, I know that, by his generosity and indefatigable and disinterested exertions he has often relieved the embarrassments and heavy distress of the unfortunate." This natural kindliness of character and generosity of disposition remained with him to the end.

Another beautiful trait in his character was his devoted love to his mother, who, as we have seen, was a very earnest Christian, and this was so marked as to sustain hope of his conversion in the heart of at least one of his friends. He was also very candid and honest, and far removed from making any profession which was not thoroughly true and real. Miss Gordon, of Wardhouse, having heard an impressive sermon on the words, "Let me die the death of the righteous," at once thought of Mr. North, whose conversion she had much at heart, and on reaching home wrote down portions of the sermon, which she thought might prove of use to him, and with earnest prayer sent them to him while he was visiting worldly friends in the Highlands.

Mr. North's answer soon came back, and so far

as she can recall it was, "To die the death of the righteous we must live the life of the righteous, dear Auntie, and I am not prepared for that yet."

While quite careless as to religion he so far had a regard for its doctrines, that he has stated in public that "there never was an hour in his life, so far as he knew himself, when he would have remained in the same room with a man who was talking open infidelity and blasphemy."

At this time, then, he had deliberately rejected the great salvation, and as he afterwards confessed before multitudes of awe-struck listeners, he had virtually said to God, "I must have my sins: I know the consequences, but I accept them; I accept damnation as my portion;" and the Lord had been just in judging, if He had taken him at his word.

This course of life continued till the autumn of 1854, when he was nearly forty-five years of age.

BROWNLOW NORTH'S CONVERSION.

"Since the dear hour that brought me to Thy foot,
And cut off all my follies by the root,
I never trusted in an arm but Thine,
Nor hoped but in Thy righteousness divine.
My prayers and tears, imperfect and defiled,
Are but the feeble efforts of a child.
I cast me at Thy feet ; my only plea
Is, what it was, dependence upon Thee." COWPER.

"Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"—ZECH. iii. 2.

II.

THE 12th of August, 1854, found Mr. North busy once more upon the Dallas moors ; and to show that his hand had not yet lost its cunning, on the 14th, after the other sportsmen had all started for distant beats, he went out, and with only his muzzle-loading gun brought in fifty brace and a bird as his contribution to the day's total. His son Brownlow claimed fifty-one brace for himself, and it was always an undecided point as to who capped the bag on that day.

But now the Spirit of God was about to revive impressions in his mind and heart with much more than their old power, to imprint them on that living tablet in such a manner as that they should never be effaced. His long-suffering was not exhausted though that of most Christians would have been so.

In the beginning of November 1854, while he had still health and vigour to relish sport as much as ever, his thoughts were wandering away to his relation to his offended God. Prayer was still ascending for him, and there was one watching to drop the word in season ; for though Mr. North had the night of his startling arrest so vividly impressed upon his mind as to recall it as the whole process of his awakening,

Miss Gordon of Wardhouse recalls the following important reminiscence :—

"Before his conversion he was spending the day in Elgin, and dined and stayed all night at my house. Our conversation, as it often did, took a serious turn. Sometimes he broke it off hastily, saying, 'You always draw me on to make admissions which make you think me better than I am.' But this evening he seemed depressed, and after some minutes' silence he exclaimed, 'I have a great mind to give it all up and go to Blackwell,' meaning, I suppose, intimacies in the Highlands where he went every Christmas, most hurtful to him, but which no entreaties could prevail on him to give up. I said, 'Who is Blackwell?' he said, 'An evangelical clergyman of the Church of England, a cousin of my mother's, a good and pious man.' I earnestly urged him to do so, and there for the time it ended." We may explain that soon afterwards, in the period of his spiritual distress, he did go up to visit the Rev. Edward Blackwell, at Amberley Rectory, whose experienced Christian counsel, then and always after, was much valued by him, and whose views of the doctrines of Divine grace appear, to a large extent, to have influenced and moulded Mr. North's own.

Mr. North then said to Miss Gordon, "You never come to see us now at Dallas; you promised my mother you would never give us up." Miss Gordon promised to come, perhaps that week, and on leaving he said to her, "Remember your promise."

In a day or two she received a note from Mrs. North, imploring her to come to them, and saying that the night before her husband had been very ill, and that she thought it was something on his mind, and if it were, he would open his mind to Miss Gordon, and that he had requested that she should be written for.

That had been the night of Brownlow North's remarkable awakening, the circumstances of which were often related by Mr. North in public. We shall here narrate it as it was given from his own lips to the students of the Edinburgh University in March 1862, as this account, taken down at the time in short-hand, is slightly fuller than any of the other published narratives of it.

"It pleased God," he said "in the month of November, 1854, one night when I was sitting playing at cards, to make me concerned about my soul. The instrument used was a sensation of sudden illness, which led me to think that I was going to die. I said to my son, 'I am a dead man; take me upstairs.' As soon as this was done, I threw myself down on the bed. My first thought then was, Now, what will my forty-four years of following the devices of my own heart profit me? In a few minutes I shall be in hell, and what good will all these things do me, for which I have sold my soul? At that moment I felt constrained to pray, but it was merely the prayer of the coward, a cry for mercy. I was not sorry for what I had done, but I was afraid of the punishment

of my sin. And yet still there was something trying to prevent me putting myself on my knees to call for mercy, and that was the presence of the maid-servant in the room, lighting my fire. Though I did not believe at that time that I had ten minutes to live, and knew that there was no possible hope for me but in the mercy of God, and that if I did not seek that mercy I could not expect to have it, yet such was the nature of my heart and of my spirit within me, that it was a balance with me, a thing to turn this way or that, I could not tell how, whether I should wait till that woman left the room, or whether I should fall on my knees and cry for mercy in her presence. By the grace of God I did put myself on my knees before that girl, and I believe it was the turning-point with me. I believe that if I had at that time resisted the Holy Ghost—of course, I cannot say, for who shall limit the Holy Ghost?—but my belief is that it would have been once too often. By God's grace I was not prevented. I did pray, and though I am not what I should be, yet I am this day what I am, which at least is not what I was. I mention this because I believe that every man has in his life his turning-point. I believe that the sin against the Holy Ghost is grieving the Spirit once too often."

On the following day he announced publicly to his friends staying in the house, and to others by letter, that from that instant he had become a

changed man, a resolution to which in the strength of the Saviour he was enabled to adhere.

When Miss Gordon of Wardhouse, who had been so suddenly summoned to Dallas, reached the house, she found Mr. North in his dressing-room, at his writing-table. He seemed as if just risen from a long illness, and very gentle and subdued in manner. He said to her little but "I am, dear auntie, I trust, by the grace of God, a changed man, and I have been writing to some of my former companions, etc." In the evening, between nine and ten o'clock, he came and joined the family; a bell rang, and she was astonished to see the household assemble for prayers. He read a portion of God's Word, and made some remarks on it, as if it had been the habit of his life. Miss Gordon adds, "I need not say how full my heart was of thanksgiving. His manner had no excitement in it, but a gentle gravity." By prayer and reading of the Scriptures he strove to find God, and pardon, and peace; but during many, many months he rose night after night from his bed, that he might retire in agony of soul to the dressing-room, and there engage in earnest supplication. Some years afterwards, when visiting Dallas with a friend, he went into the billiard room, and pointing to the chimney-piece said that when in that room he had been so suddenly awakened he took his cigar from his mouth, and laid it down there, never to be touched again; for though he had been in the habit of constant smoking from the time he was

twelve years of age, and became so addicted to it that he even took a cigar in his mouth often when he went to bed, and fell asleep with it between his lips, he never afterwards touched the weed or took a billiard cue in his hand.

The announcement made by Brownlow North to his old friends of his sudden change, whether orally or in writing, created no small sensation among them. Some thought he had gone out of his mind, others thought it was a temporary impression or excitement, and that it would soon pass off, and this was specially the case with those of them who were acquainted with his previous convictions and temporary reformations, while in some of the newspapers it was even said, after he began his public work, that the whole thing was done for a wager, and that he had taken a bet to gather a certain number of thousands or ten thousands of hearers in a given time. So little do carnal men understand the workings of the Spirit of God, even when they see the most striking and manifest proofs of it. Not only did worldly people stand in doubt of him, but Christian people stood aloof from him for a time, and he underwent the trying ordeal of St. Paul, when he essayed to join himself to the disciples, recorded in Acts ix. 26, to whose case his own experience of God's sovereign awakening power had borne a very marked resemblance. Mr. North recorded this similarity of his case to that of Saul of Tarsus in a marginal note on John iv. 27, 'Upon this came Jesus' disciples, and marvelled that

He talked with the woman.' "It is often a marvel to disciples in every age the people Christ speaks to. When Paul was converted, they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. So it was with Brownlow North, and no wonder; yet for all that he does believe that the Lord has spoken to him. To Him be the gratitude and the glory!" So on the remark of Festus to Paul at his trial (Acts xxvi. 24), that the apostle was "beside himself" and "mad," Mr. North notes from his own experience, "Christians in all ages have been called mad; but who was the most mad, Paul or Festus?" and at ver. 22, when Paul said that it was by the help of God that he had continued from the day of his conversion until that day, he doubly underlines Paul's words, and adds, "It was God who enabled him to continue. Give Him the glory, and trust in Him, and He will enable me."

But some at least of his old Christian friends, who had known the history of his careless godless days, and the history of his religious impressions, stood by him and encouraged him at this crisis of his life. Especially was this the case with Miss Gordon, of Wardhouse, who writes in September, 1877, after describing her arrival at Dallas and the evening family worship: "He was soon obliged to go on a mission of kindness promised to godless friends (for he was by nature kind and generous). His family were fearful for his health, and he did not seem fit to go, for such a mental revolution had acted on

his frame, but no one else I found could do it. I asked him to let me hear soon from him. He wrote from Inverness, having gone there on Saturday to catch the Fort William boat early on Monday, (formerly he always went on the Sabbath,) and his note contained a few words. 'I have been twice to the Free Church. I am kept. Yours, etc.' And 'I am kept' were long the last words in his notes to me."

It was probably on this very journey to or from his destination in the steamer on the Caledonian Canal that he attracted the attention, by his altered appearance, of the men on board the ship; for in the year 1866, when in conversation with the steward of one of these steamers, and happening to mention the name of Brownlow North, the steward, said to the writer, "Do you know him, sir?" and on our replying in the affirmative, and asking if he knew him, or had heard him speak, he said he had seen him on board the steamer shortly before and shortly after his change, and that he never in his life saw such an alteration in any man. In going Northward he attracted his observation by the great amount of spirits he consumed, and the general recklessness of his bearing, and in returning he was so pulled down and weakened, that he had to lean heavily on a staff in coming on board, and seemed very solemn and very much shaken, like a man who had just recovered from a fever, and then he learned that what had pulled him down and so

shaken his stalwart frame was no bodily illness, but distress of soul, and he seemed thoroughly satisfied that it must have been a very deep and very severe anguish of spirit that had produced such an effect on his outward frame, that, as he said, he would hardly have known him for the same man.

Thus suddenly arrested, awakened, and reformed, it must not be supposed that Brownlow North as rapidly found peace in believing in the Saviour. As we have already indicated, he underwent a very severe and prolonged period of deep spiritual conflict, which made the strong man become feeble through the intensity of his emotion and the protractedness of his distress. With him it was of a truth the strong man striving, and striving with all the powers of his being, and the faculties of his mind and spirit, to enter in at the strait gate; while he wrestled not only against the flesh and blood of his old nature, but, as he himself felt, against principalities, against powers, and against the rulers of the darkness of this world (Eph. vi. 12). His being brought through such a severe ordeal, and kept for so long travelling through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, was probably due in part to his having so long resisted the strivings of the Divine Spirit, but in part also to the design of the Almighty to fit him by his own experience to enter into the sympathies and spiritual difficulties of multitudes of anxious souls, by giving him a deep knowledge of the deceitfulness and sinfulness of the human heart, and of the countless

snares and devices of the wicked one. Certain it is that not a few of those men of God who have been the honoured instruments of turning many to the saving knowledge of Jesus, and delivering them from the bondage of sin and corruption, were led in like manner through fire and through water, before they were brought out into the wealthy place. The cases of Martin Luther and John Bunyan, along with many others, will at once suggest themselves to many of our readers.

During this long period he read nothing but the Bible, not even looking at a newspaper. The Rev. Charles G. Scott, formerly of Harrow Road Church, London, and who was working in the parish of Dyke at the time of Mr. North's conversion, mentions that Mr. North told him that at that time he was so engrossed with the concerns of his soul, that although the Crimean War was raging, its thrilling events were all unknown to him, and that one day when the country was ringing with the details of the battle of Inkermann, happening to be travelling on the outside of a stage-coach, he overheard a conversation about the great battle which had been fought on the 5th of November, and of which he knew nothing, so entirely absorbed was he in the greater and more terrible conflict that was raging within his own breast.

He has stated in public that at this season he often put himself upon his knees, or stretched himself upon his rug, with his mouth in the dust, seeking to get

hold of the truth that the person he called God heard him. At last he was enabled to realize this fact by reasoning with himself that if God had been present with him since he was a child, and knew every act he had done, then surely He must know what was passing now, and must be present though he did not see Him.

Mr. North states that through this period he was very much afraid of God and of Christ. As an instance of this he has recorded that, five or six weeks after his awakening, a Christian friend was sitting with him, and asked him if he ever prayed for the coming of Christ; to which he replied, "No, I should be afraid. Suppose He were to come, I should be in dreadful fear." "Well," said his friend, "we are told to do it." They talked together, and his friend showed him that there was a positive command to pray for His coming. Soon after they united in prayer. Mr. North joined in the supplication, and when he concluded, his friend reminded him to pray for Christ's coming. To this Mr. North replied that he did not desire it, and therefore it would be hypocrisy to ask for it. His friend said, "Pray God to make you wish it. Tell Him the truth." Mr. North then reasoned with himself, that he had accepted His atonement, had laid the burden of his sins upon Him, that if the Redeemer came, He would come as his Saviour, therefore he felt he could honestly desire it, and he prayed, "Come, Lord Jesus!" This incident also evinces that thorough genuineness and transparent honesty which charac-

terised the whole of his religious life from its very commencement.

In the month of December, 1854, he went up and visited his mother, spending Christmas with her, and remained with her for a short time, when she rejoiced over the answer to her long interceding for his salvation, and was filled with thankfulness over her son who had been dead and was alive again, who had been lost and was found. He was much encouraged by his saintly mother saying to him, "Brownlow, God is not only able to save you, but to make you more conspicuous for good than ever you were for evil!" At the same time he visited his relative, the Rev. Edward Blackwell, who was a skilful analyst of the human heart; he dealt very faithfully and kindly with him, although at first, Mr. North told a friend, the only text he could give him was that "Esau found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." But there was no one from whose counsel then and afterwards Mr. North derived more benefit.

It was in this prolonged period of anxiety of soul that many of the truths which he afterwards preached with such amazing fervour and force were written by the Spirit of the living God upon the tablet of his heart, and burned into the very texture of his being. It was now that the thought of eternity was ever present to his distracted mind; now that he was taught that *God is*, when tempted long and sorely to doubt it; now that he was brought to realize not only God's existence, but His immediate pre-

sence ever beside him, so that he foresaw the Lord God always before him, and believed that he could not escape from His presence. It was now that he learned to hang for his life upon the naked word of God, feeling that only that which had divine authority, and was fully inspired by the Spirit of God, could afford ground for hope or confidence to a sinner such as he was; now that he was led to sound the depths of corruption within him, and learned that in himself he was absolutely helpless towards God, and that he must be renewed by the Holy Ghost. It was now also that he was taught at last to believe in the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God as sufficient to cleanse from all sin, even from sins so scarlet-coloured and doubly-dyed as his had been; and now that the lesson came home that the sinner is justified instrumentally by faith, and not by his own feelings, that what is subjective and changeable can never be the ground of an unchanging state of reconciliation, or of a peace which will have to bear the brunt of many a hellish battery, and stand unshaken amid the changing circumstances, the drifting tides, and the driving storm or sunshine of an unstable world. During these weary months he had many difficulties about the truths of God's Word, and he tells us that he had to humble himself, and though an elderly man, to enter into the kingdom of God like a little child.

One of his difficulties was about the divine and human natures of Jesus Christ. One day, about three weeks after his awakening, he was reading

John v. 16—30, after having sought the Holy Spirit's teaching. After reading the words, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," his thoughts wandered from the passage before him, and he began to meditate about the deep things of the Divine Word, and after thinking for a long time on these abstruse subjects he was aroused by a violent headache. "I had been thinking," he says, "probably for hours, about the plainly revealed but unexplained mysteries of God, and was no wiser; they still remained unrevealed and still unexplained, and all the fruit of my thinking seemed a headache." After a time he began to think again, and said aloud to himself, "Brownlow North, do you think by your own reason or deep thinking you can find out God or know Christ better than the Bible can teach you to know Him? if you do not, why are you perplexing your brains with worse than useless speculations? Why are you not learning and holding on by what you learn from the Scriptures? You are shut up to one of two things, you must either make a god and a religion for yourself, and stand or fall eternally by it, or you must take the religion of Jesus Christ as revealed to you in His Word. You cannot receive a little of God's teaching and a little of your own, you cannot believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and the wisdom of your own heart at the same time. Choose then, now and for ever, by which you will stand or fall." He then struck his hand forcibly upon his open Bible, and said, "God helping me, I will stand or fall by the

Lord Jesus Christ. I will put my trust in His truth, and in His teaching as I find it in the written Word of God; and doing that, so sure as the Lord Jesus Christ is the truth, I must be forgiven and saved." After that he tells us he ceased to try to reconcile apparently opposing doctrines of Scripture, or those that were above his reason, submitting his intellect like a little child to the teaching of God's Word and Spirit. (See "Christ the Saviour and Christ the Judge," pp. 214, 238.)

Still fierce temptations beset him, and much darkness beclouded his soul for many months after this. He tells us that on the day already referred to the 21st verse of John v. struck him very powerfully as he read, "The Son quickeneth whom He will." He saw it was a certainty that if he received the kingdom of God as a little child, since Christ could quicken whom He would, He could quicken him. At least he felt that he *might* be saved, for he had found one who was able to save anybody, and therefore could save him.

In the month of March 1855, he let his moors, and returned to the town of Elgin, where he attached himself to the ministry of the late Rev. Donald Gordon, minister of the Free Church, son of the well-known Rev. Dr. Robert Gordon of Edinburgh. Of Mr. Gordon's ministrations he always spoke most thankfully, and gratefully acknowledged the spiritual help which he derived from them. One who was at the time a member of the congregation writes: "Mr.

North, on his arrival in Elgin, seemed in great distress of mind, so overwhelming was the sight of himself which he had got. At that time Mr. Gordon was lecturing through St. Mark, and Sabbath by Sabbath the subjects of the lectures that came in course seemed to suit Mr. North's case so startlingly, that I think I see him now with his eyes riveted on the speaker, and sometimes for very gladness of heart I have seen the tears run down his face in church."

Miss Gordon, of Wardhouse, in recalling this time, says, "In the spring of the year he and Mrs. North came to stay with me. His health was very much shaken. Mr. Gordon, the Free Church minister, was much with him, but he lived much in his little study which I had prepared for him, and except for meals and family worship we seldom saw him. He took long walks, and gave a tract to every one he met, at first with diffidence, but he said he never had but one refusal. His time in the house was occupied in studying the Word and prayer. He sometimes got up in the night, went to his study, and prayed aloud, I would say, agonized in prayer." The Rev. Adam Lind, the minister of the Congregational Chapel, Elgin, writes: "For some time after coming to Elgin, he lived in great retirement, deeply engrossed with his Bible, and abounding in private prayer. I saw him occasionally, and had ample opportunities of observing the workings of his mind, and the mark of true grace which struck me first in his case was the spirit of profound humility, penitence, and adoring

gratitude. He seemed like one unable to get out of the region of wonder and amazement at the sovereign kindness of that benignant Being who had borne with him so long in his sin, and such sin, and so much sin; and not only borne with him, but shielded him, and held him back from self-ruin, at length arresting him in his career of folly and wickedness, and bringing him to Himself, a pardoned penitent, a returned prodigal." The Rev. H. M. Williamson, of Belfast, who as minister in Huntly, was much honoured in connection with revival work in the North-Eastern counties, and intimately associated with Mr. North in his labours, writes: "The first time I saw him was in the Free Church, Elgin, then under the ministry of Mr. Gordon. I was preaching on the Fast-day, and he was present. I had scarcely reached the pulpit when I was arrested by his appearance. Indeed, I was so fascinated that I felt considerably disturbed during the service. There was the exhibition of such force of character, such a strength of will, the lines of a life for self and evil, an air of unrest, and a hungry look of soul, that cannot be described, as with lowering brows he looked into the speaker and listened to every utterance. When I came down from the pulpit I asked Mr. Gordon, 'Who is that remarkable person, and what is his strange history? He looks as if he had been a servant of evil, and yet he looks as if yielding wholly to God.' Mr. G. replied, 'Oh, that is Mr. Brownlow North! he has been remarkably awakened, and we trust really brought to God.'"

During these long dark months he was often sorely tempted to deny the very being of God, and to find relief in atheism from the accusations of conscience and the weary struggles of his soul towards the light for which he was vainly, as it seemed to him, groping. We have heard him tell how at this momentous period of his history the suggestion that there was no God, and that His existence was a mere fable, often so persistently pressed itself upon him, even when on his knees in prayer, that he felt as if Satan were at his elbow, constantly whispering, "*There is no God, there is no God!*" that he would then have to rise from his knees, and walk up and down the little gravel path in his back garden at Elgin for hours, almost like one demented, iterating and reiterating the words, "*God is, there is a God,*" in reply to these temptations of the devil or of his own heart; until enabled once more to realize His existence he returned to his devotion. It might be when he went out into the street upon some business, perhaps before he was aware, his faith in the existence of God again would fail, and, plunged into a sea of doubt and distress, he would return to repeat his whole wrestling and struggling until God satisfied him once more of the truth of His existence. It was a trying ordeal to go through; but when once the way of escape from this temptation was opened to him in God's good time, it left his foot planted upon a rock which never trembled beneath him, and gave him a manly, almost a Titanic grasp of

the truth of the being of God, which added vivid colour and character to all his lifelong preaching. We shall refer to this again in its own place.

At one critical time during this period of soul-conflict he stated in one of his addresses that the question, "Believest thou that I am able to do this?" was made a word of life to him. He writes: "I was very near death; I was almost despairing. The only thing that kept my head above water was the promise, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' I repeated it again and again, and prayed very earnestly, when the word came to me with such power, and with such a rebuke, 'Believest thou that I am able to do this?' He *was* able, and I believed Him, and He did it."

The above text, John vi. 37, was one which he never wearied of quoting, to which he never failed in public and in private to direct the anxious and returning sinner, and no words are oftener written on the pages of his private Bible than those which, like the old woman, he could mark as both "tried and proved," "*Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*"

At length he was delivered out of all his distresses and perplexities through the Word and by the Spirit of God, and we shall give his description of his deliverance in his own words. "I had risen from my bed in my soul agony, for I was many months in trouble about my soul, though I need not have been as many hours, if I had only had faith to believe in Jesus

Christ, and to make my own heart a liar; but my own heart told me that I was the chief of sinners, that Paul, who called himself the chief, was not to be compared—no neither was he—to me, and that there could be no hope for me; and for months I believed my own heart. One night, being unable to sleep, I had risen and gone into my closet to read the Bible. The portion I was reading was the third chapter of Romans; and as I read the twentieth and following verses, a new light seemed to break in on my soul. 'By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in God's sight.' That I knew. But then I went on to read, 'But now, *now*, the righteousness of God *without the law* is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ *unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference.*' With that passage came light into my soul. Striking my book with my hand, and springing from my chair, I cried, 'If that scripture is true, I am a saved man! That is what I want; that is what God offers me; that is what I will have.' God helping me, it was that I took: THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD WITHOUT THE LAW. It is my ONLY hope."*

Now could Brownlow North utter with a depth and fulness of significance which few could surpass, the inspired song which a few years afterwards became

* From "The Lord our Righteousness."

the favourite and characteristic hymn of praise of young converts in the Great Irish Revival of 1859-60.

> " He took me from a fearful pit,
> And from the miry clay ;
> And on a rock He set my feet,
> Establishing my way.
>
> He put a new song in my mouth,
> Our God to magnify :
> Many shall see it, and shall fear,
> And on the Lord rely."
>
> PSALM xl. 2, 3. (Scotch Version.)

So terrible had been the protracted spiritual conflict from which he now emerged, that looking back on it after ten years he stated on one occasion in public that he wished his worst enemy might be spared going through the same ordeal. He also said that his friends had sometimes feared that his reason might give way under the severity of the strain upon his mind and spirit.

We have heard it remarked by some that great part of the influence afterwards wielded by Brownlow North, and by others who like him had gone great lengths in the service of sin and Satan, was owing to the very fact that they had so long and openly served "the world, the flesh, and the devil," whose service they afterwards as openly renounced ; and that on this account they made more effective preachers of the gospel than those who had been more under the control of restraining grace. While not denying that

the conversion of a John Newton, a Colonel Gardiner, or a Brownlow North, and their subsequent zeal for their Lord and Saviour have been the means of arresting others who like them were living without the fear of God in the world, we are sure that the service of sin is in all cases very bitter, and must always have bitter fruits and baneful consequences, even in those cases in which God may in His all-wise and almighty grace bring good out of evil. Where the conscience has been cleansed from flagrant sin by the sweet sprinkling of the all-atoning blood of the great propitiation, the memory must through life retain sin's dark stains and saddening recollections; evil has been done to others, which it may be impossible ever wholly to undo; and habits have been formed through a long course of sinful indulgence which are most injurious to the man himself. These can be unformed by the Spirit's assistance only through much tribulation, and the effects of them in many of the subjects of renewing grace are never entirely removed in this life. Mr. North never was in the habit of dwelling except in most general though emphatic terms, and in a passing way, upon his unconverted days (as some do surely most unwisely both as regards themselves and others), and the fact that nearly forty-five years of his life had been spent in open disregard of God had not only left him the painful retrospect of a waste of valuable years, but impressed his character with certain defects and blemishes which were never wholly erased. The want in him of such entire and con-

stant self-denial, as distinguished from Christian self-surrender, as has characterised such men as the Rev. Robert M. McCheyne and Mr. North's own dear and attached friend and fellow-labourer, Hay Macdowall Grant, of Arndilly,* may perhaps be traced to the long course of years during which he lived for and worshipped self before the idol was broken and he was led to worship God. This beautiful trait in the Christian character is indeed rarely found in its perfection, but is very attractive and influential wherever it is present in a marked degree. It always must be "an evil thing and a bitter" to have openly forsaken the Lord our God; and when the iniquity is freely pardoned, and the yoke of the transgressions broken, the scars from the yoke and the marks of the chains often remain.

It was ever with deep sorrow and humiliation that this man of God on occasion alluded to himself as being like the man who was above forty years of age on whom the miracle of healing was showed (Acts iv. 22). On the first page of the New Testament which he began to use on New Year's Day, 1855, is the affecting inscription, written apparently at first in pencil, and afterwards traced in ink: "*B. North, a man whose sins crucified the Son of God.*" And his words and manner alike in alluding to his having

* See the valuable Memior of Hay Macdowall Grant, Esq., by Mrs. Gordon, of Parkhill, published by Messrs. Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday.

been as one born out of due time proved that his deepest feeling was—

"Alas, that I so lately knew Thee,
Thee so worthy of the best;
Nor had sooner turned to view Thee,
Truest good, and only rest!
The more I love, I mourn the more
That I did not love before."

FIRST PRIVATE EFFORTS TO SAVE SOULS.

"I say to thee, Do thou repeat
To the first man whom thou dost meet
In lane, highway, or open street,
That he, and thou, and all men move
Under one canopy of love,
As broad as the blue sky above."

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

"If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? and He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it?"—PROV. xxiv. 11, 12.

III.

THE grace of God in the heart of man very soon betrays its presence. It is the imparting to the soul of the mind of Christ, which desires the welfare of our brother as well as the glory of our God. In its own nature it is expansive and communicative. It is like light, whose property it is to shine; like salt, whose nature it is to communicate to foreign substances its saltness; like seed, which ever seeks to reproduce itself; like water, which descending from above into an earthly heart, becomes therein a well of water springing up to everlasting life. These are not accidents, but are essential properties of grace wherever found. The soul that was dead, when made alive is made a new centre, source, and spring of life amid a world of death. Christians are this world's light amid its night, and this world's salt amid its putrefaction, and this world's springs of living water in its wastes of barrenness, and the seed which yet shall fill the world's face with its fruit. Life loves to work, and where there is no work there is no life, or only weak and dying life.

We need not wonder then to find that Brownlow North, as soon as he had seen the Saviour, desired to

point Him out to others, as soon as he had tasted of the living water sought to lead others to the fountain's brink, and to persuade them to stoop down and drink. The wonder would have been had it been otherwise. His energy of character, natural gifts, and power of mind, combined with special grace vouchsafed to him, made him the powerful preacher he afterwards became; but grace, native and simple, made him, what it makes every true recipient, anxious within his present sphere to use each opportunity to commend his Saviour by lip and life to all with whom he came in contact.

He has told us that it was about eleven months after his awakening at Dallas, when he strongly felt it to be his duty to do some service for the Lord. For two months before this he had shut himself up in his own room, reading the Bible and praying. He then said to himself that he must do something for God, but felt that he could not. The thought suggested itself to his mind that he might at least distribute tracts, but he felt that to do so would make himself ridiculous, and that the people would laugh at him and call him mad. At last he resolved to try, and putting a number of tracts into his pocket, he went into the most secluded part of Elgin, in which he was living. The first person he met with was an old woman who amazed him by accepting his tract without laughing at him. To another old woman whom he saw coming down the road he presented another tract, and she received it with thanks. The third he

gave to a policeman, who said, "Thank you, Mr. North." He recorded it as his experience after fourteen years' trial, that only on one occasion was a tract refused, and that was by a professed infidel, and yet he had systematically given away tracts to persons of all ranks, in all sorts of places. Very few Christians can be preachers like Brownlow North, but there are none who cannot be tract distributors.

Like most other persons, he found it no easy thing to serve the Lord and try to do good to the souls of others, especially at the commencement of his course. There is often opposition in our own hearts before we can humble ourselves even to hand a tract to an acquaintance or to an unknown fellow-passenger, and sometimes, though rarely, we will find our proffer of a tract resented as a liberty. Mr. North met with some opposition at first, even in giving away tracts. The Rev. Fergus Ferguson mentions that once in Glasgow, when he had preached a public sermon in which he referred to Mr. North as a remarkable trophy of Divine grace, a gentleman asked to be introduced to him at the close of the service, and told him that he came from a district in the West Highlands, in which Mr. North had resided a considerable time before his conversion, and that he recollected his returning there after his great change, and trying to undo some of the evil he had done by giving away tracts. The people, probably doubting the sincerity of his repentance, avoided him and his tracts. Mr. North bore this with beautiful humility, as a cross

which perhaps he deserved to bear. But he was not on this account discouraged or weary in well-doing, but left the tracts lying on prominent places on the roads, and on windy days put them under stones, that the wind might not blow them away, and that that other wind, that bloweth where it listeth, might gain access to some poor sinner's heart.

He always continued the practice of tract-distribution, although to the last he often found it a trial to do so. We have heard him say that, after he had served the Lord for years, it sometimes cost him half an hour's internal struggle before he could muster courage to offer a tract to a gentleman travelling in a railway carriage with him. Once on arriving at Ramornie to visit his friend Sheriff Maitland Heriot, he mentioned that in crossing the ferry to Tayport in the steamer he saw a group of gentlemen talking. His conscience told him that he ought to embrace the opportunity and speak, or give a tract to them ; but then it would be much more pleasant and easy to do nothing. This went on for some time, but at last the feeling that it might be a matter of eternal life or death gained the victory, and approaching them he offered each of them a tract, which was accepted quite politely, and he found that some of the company had recognised him, and would rather have been surprised if he had remained quiet. Following out his views of the usefulness of these short messengers of truth, he wrote afterwards a number of pointed and powerful tracts on the leading truths of salvation, which, as will be

seen from this volume, have been greatly blessed to souls.

We have before us three long and carefully drawn out lists of tracts which he ordered from London, that he might distribute them with his own hand in Elgin; for he felt himself as yet unworthy to speak a word to a fellow-sinner on behalf of his Saviour. These lists contain the names of 139 different tracts, of each of which he ordered quantities varying from twenty to fifty. In this way a year passed from the date of his awakening at Dallas. About that time he began to visit among the sick and poor at Elgin, particularly those connected with Mr. Gordon's church. A friend who knew him well at that time writes: "I remember his supplying the very poor and bedridden with many little comforts, such as introducing gas into their cheerless rooms, and paying for it himself. I have myself gone with him to see some of these poor creatures, and I shall never forget some of these visits, one in particular, to a poor wretched old body, who had been unable to leave her bed for years. Mr. North would take a little stool, sit down by her unlit fire, and peel oranges for her, and this in a room where the surroundings were too disgusting even to mention. At that time, I, for one, felt that I could not be in his company for a quarter of an hour without being benefited by it. We all loved him much."

Once, in Aberdeen, in January, 1863, when speaking of this time, in drawing a contrast between the promptings of the flesh and the promptings of the

Spirit, he said, "When I first came to know the Lord, the Spirit said to me, 'Brownlow North, there's that woman in the porter's lodge; you ought to go and speak to her about religion.' But the flesh said, 'Do nothing of the sort; keep what you've got to yourself.' But the Spirit gave me no rest till I went to the woman at the porter's lodge, and read the Bible to her, and told her what the Lord had done for my soul. Then again the Spirit said to me, 'There's that washerwoman in the town, you know; you should go to her, and read and pray with her also.' But the flesh said, 'Do nothing of the sort; she will likely think that she has more religion than you have.' Still the Spirit would give me no rest till I read and prayed with the washerwoman also." In these early visits he seems to have confined himself to giving away tracts, reading the Bible, and occasionally engaging in prayer.

The first time, according to his recollection, when he went to speak to any one directly about the soul, was on being sent for in November, 1855, by a woman who carried his letter bag, to speak to her dying niece. Feeling this to be a call from God, he went to the house. He found that she was a Christia., and drawing rapidly near her end. The poor dying girl said to him, "O sir, never mind me; but say something through me to my father, for father is a bad man." He addressed himself to her father, who seemed impressed, as was also his wife, by his words, and by the solemn circumstances he was in. Two

careless persons who happened to be present were interested in what Mr. North said, and returned to hear him speak whenever he visited the house. The father became a reformed man. The news of this spread among the neighbours, and they flocked into the dying girl's room whenever Mr. North was present. After this had gone on for several days, a woman came to him, and said, "O sir, I wish you would come and speak to my husband, as you are speaking here; for he is a bad man too, and I think you might do him good." He agreed to go and converse with the man; and on leaving, he asked him to return, saying that he would gather ten or twelve of his fellow-workmen, who were journeymen shoemakers, to listen to him. He addressed the little gathering of shoemakers as requested, who were so interested that they asked him to come and speak to them again, and on coming on the evening named, he found the room crowded with some fifty or sixty people. The shoemaker who had asked him to give the address afterwards died rejoicing in Jesus, as did also his wife. Thus drawn by providential leading into this work, he soon found himself holding a cottage meeting every evening of the week, and once spoke in a granary to about two hundred people.

Mrs. Macdonald, the widow of the Rev. John Macdonald of Calcutta, went to one of these little gatherings one evening. She could get no further in than half-way up the stair, and told a friend that she

had heard nothing like it since she listened to her father-in-law, the "Apostle of the North."

From various quarters we have received testimony to the interest that was awakened and the good that was effected by these visits to the sick, and little cottage-meetings held in Elgin and its immediate neighbourhood. Mr. John Kintrea, of Elgin, referring to them, says, "During the first year of his residence in Elgin, Mr. North was much in the habit of visiting the sick, and at such visits he ordinarily read and explained suitable passages of Scripture. The neighbours generally were on the watch for his visits, and came into the sick room to hear him, often crowding the apartment to the inconvenience of the sufferer. In one instance, because of this, his meetings had to be discontinued. In addition to his Elgin cottage meetings, which were at this time almost nightly, he held weekly meetings in Bishopmills, a loft having been got for the purpose; and although the place was capable of holding a good number, such was the desire to hear him, that the place was crowded before the hour of meeting, numbers having to go away unable to get a hearing.

"Sometimes, after conducting these little meetings, one of the office-bearers of the Free Church would convoy him home, to whom he often expressed his fears lest he should, in holding such meetings, be travelling beyond the line of duty, and trespassing upon the sphere belonging to the ministry. Yet he could find no satisfactory reason to his own mind for

refusing calls to go and speak at such gatherings when invited to do so. At this time this subject seemed to occupy his mind a good deal, and he appeared to be looking up for light and guidance."

It was now that Mr. John Gow, late town missionary in Elgin, became acquainted with Mr. North. Mr. Gow had long been in the habit of visiting the patients in Gray's Hospital on Sabbath afternoons. One night, as he was returning home, a gentleman, whom he did not know, put two tracts into his hand, and on mentioning the circumstance next day to some of his acquaintances, he learned that it was a gentleman recently converted, who had begun to hold cottage meetings through the town, and that he was to hold one on the following Tuesday in a room in Masson Lodge Close. Accordingly Mr. Gow went to the meeting, which he much enjoyed, and at the close was introduced to Mr. North as a brother worker. Mr. North invited him to another of his meetings which he had arranged to hold in Fraser's Close, and at the same time expressed a wish to accompany him to Gray's Hospital, which he did the following Sunday, and on several succeeding ones.

A short time after Mr. North told him that he thought a Scripture-reader would be very useful in Elgin, and asked him if he was willing to undertake the duties, which after careful consideration he decided to do. Mr. North then applied to his friends in Elgin to raise the needful salary in annual subscriptions, and got a local committee appointed to superintend

the work. Mr. Gow began his work as missionary in March 1856, and prosecuted it till his sudden death this spring, not without tokens of the Master's blessing. After some years Mr. Robert Brander, banker, Elgin, most liberally made over the sum of £1000, the interest of which was to be applied to the annual salary of the missionary.

Thus from the very first Mr. North not only threw himself heart and soul into hard and earnest work for his Saviour, but exerted himself to secure the co-operation both of voluntary assistants and of stated and regular labourers; realizing the immense strength of Satan's kingdom in the earth, and that to attack it with any hopes of solid and lasting victory demands all the combined strength, wisdom, and zeal of the soldiers of the cross.

Having at first scruples about the propriety of one who was merely a layman doing so much in the way of addressing his fellow-men, even in these small meetings, he spread the whole matter before the Lord in prayer, asking Him to close the door if it were not in accordance with His will that he should thus address his fellow-sinners. Waiting and watching the indications of Providence for an answer to his prayer, he received an increasing number of requests to speak, and heard of an increasing number of cases of spiritual impression. Thus he gathered assuredly that the Lord did not wish him to be altogether silent.

About this time another providential circumstance

led him to believe that the Lord was calling him to speak, and not to hold his peace. He had gone up, as he told the Rev. C. H. Scott, to England to see his beloved mother, now rejoicing over the conversion of her prodigal, her long prayed for, and now penitent son, and "when in London he went on a Sunday afternoon to see a Morayshire young man, who had been appointed secretary to a Young Men's Christian Institute. This young man had himself been converted in a sudden and remarkable manner; and, filled with zeal for God and love to souls, used to spend his Sunday afternoons in street preaching. When Mr. North called on him, he was just preparing to visit one of his stations situated at King's Cross, and asked Mr. North to accompany him. They went together. The young man took up his station at his accustomed corner, and after devotional exercises began to address a promiscuous but not very numerous assembly. His words did not *tell*, and were received at first with indifference, and soon with angry opposition and a torrent of the foulest blasphemy. Mr. North was beginning to doubt the wisdom of thus casting pearls before swine, and giving occasion to the worst blasphemy he had ever listened to, when several voices were heard calling upon him to speak. "We'll hear that stout man with the dark eyes." Thus called on, he felt constrained to speak. Instantly every eye was fixed on him. He riveted and retained the attention of all; and when he met the blaspheming sophistry of the

infidel, he manifestly carried the bulk of his audience along with him. When addressing to them a closing personal appeal, he was forced to stop through sheer exhaustion and want of breath. Many cried out, "Go on, sir; we want to hear more." But he was physically unable to say more. On which an old man exclaimed, "Sir, your words should be written in letters of gold!"

Mr. North was encouraged by this essay at addressing publicly a most unwilling audience on the state of their souls, and by his success in apparently interesting and impressing them.

Shortly after this, in May 1856, he left Elgin for a little, by the doctor's advice, to take rest and recruit his strength, which was worn out by the multitude of his daily cottage meetings and visitations, and went to Dallas, his old residence, where he was looking forward to worship in the Free Church on the following Lord's Day. The Rev. W. Davidson, the minister, was called away from home, and no supply could be got for the pulpit. Mr. North was told that the church would be closed unless he consented to address the people, and was urgently pressed to agree to do so. After objecting to speak in a regular place of worship, on the ground of not being ordained, he agreed that if one of the elders read a chapter and conducted the devotional exercises, and called on him to give an address, he would do what he could. The people were impressed both by what they heard and by what they saw; for they saw

one who had for years lived in their midst a reckless and godless life, now standing up and warning them to flee from coming wrath, to which his own eyes had eighteen months before been suddenly opened. On the Monday morning following there was a great flood in the river, and two little children, trying to cross it on a plank, were washed off and drowned. This sad event plunged the village into mourning, and as the minister was from home the father came and entreated Mr. North to comfort the bereaved mother. He did so. The bodies of the little children were recovered from the cruel flood on two successive days of suspense and sorrow, and as each little corpse was carried to the door of the dwelling which they had left together in health and happiness, a sympathising crowd accompanied each sorrowful procession, and Mr. North addressed them, impressing more deeply the truths which he had preached the previous Sabbath. Towards the end of the week the minister returned home; but finding his people impressed by the services, and being asked himself to go and preach elsewhere, he agreed to do so, and constrained Mr. North again to address his people. The church was crowded, people flocking from a distance to hear the new preacher and his rousing message. Among the audience were two men from Forres, about eight miles off, who carried home with them the tidings of this work of awakening. In consequence a deputation was sent to ask him to give an address in the Free Church there. He presented the same objec-

tions as he had done to Mr. Davidson; but the people would take no denial, and he went and held several evening services. The first night he had a large and earnest audience, the next night the church was full, after which passages, staircases, and doorways were thronged with eager and anxious listeners. We are told by one who knows the locality well that permanent good was effected at that time, and that the fruits of that, as of other revival movements, may still be traced.

Mr. North on several occasions was at pains to explain the position he then occupied. "Don't think," he said, "that I am intruding into the office of the holy ministry. I am not an authorised preacher, but I'll tell you what I am; I am a man who has been at the brink of the bottomless pit and has looked in, and as I see many of you going down to that pit, I am here to 'hollo' you back, and warn you of your danger. I am here, also, as the chief of sinners, saved by grace, to tell you that the grace which has saved me can surely save you."

In the providence of God the ministry of Mr. North thus began at Dallas, which had been for many years the scene where he lived after the course of this world, eagerly following its fashions, frivolities, and sins. It was here that God so ordered it that he gave his first public testimony in the house of God on behalf of the Son of God, whom by his life and lip he had so resolutely opposed and persecuted. After his great change, when a friend asked him

what he intended to do, his reply was, "I have done all the harm I could in Scotland, and now I intend to remain there and do all the good I can." It is always hard to unlearn evil that has through a course of years been learned, but it is harder still to undo evil that has through a course of years been done. It was touching to those who met him in private after his conversion to see how much his heart was set on this, how earnestly he longed and prayed for it, and it is touching to find to what a very large extent his heavenly Father granted him this desire of his heart, and made him useful to many to whom of old his influence had been baneful. We have only been able to obtain clues to this interesting feature of his work in a few cases; but from knowing how much his heart was set on it, and from the humanly speaking accidental manner in which these cases have come to our knowledge, we cannot doubt that, could we trace the influence of his two lives, we should find many instances in which his God made him a minister of mercy to those whom formerly he had encouraged on the broad way that leadeth to destruction.

As showing how much he desired and laboured for the conversion of such, we may state that shortly after his awakening, and long before he found peace himself, he undertook a long journey to visit a careless family with whom he had been intimate, to try to arouse them to concern for their souls. While residing in the house of my father, he once confined himself to his room for a great portion of the day, writing a letter with

which he seemed much burdened, and he mentioned that the reason why it was costing him so much anxiety and prayer was that it was addressed to one whom he had known well in the days of his folly and sin, and whom he now earnestly desired to be the means of leading to his Saviour.

A gentleman, who had been a boy at Eton with him, wrote in reply to a letter asking for information about his Eton days, that all his school recollections of North were painful and saddening, and yet, in God's all-wise providence, Brownlow North was made a means of blessing to his old schoolfellow's son, who is now a minister in the Church of England. Regarding this case, which was one that gave him much encouragement at the time, Mr North wrote to a friend :—

"LONDON, *Dec. 26th*, 1859.

"I must tell you an incident of my first meeting in Exeter Hall. On that evening a Mr. A——, who was the boy that sat next to me at Eton, in school, for about five years, and who is himself a Christian, and felt much interested in his old school-friend, Brownlow North, came up from Buckinghamshire to hear me speak. He came to me in the Committee Room, and made himself known to me, and introduced his son, a fine young man about twenty-two. On the Friday night after, just before going into a lecture I was to give in the City, the door opened, and in rushed A——, his face beaming with delight, followed by his son. He had come up to tell me that his son had been

convinced of sin in Exeter Hall; had gone home, and been in such trouble that he could not rest; had been obliged to come up again to my inquirers' meeting; had found the Lord, and there he was to speak for himself. It was unspeakably interesting—the young man standing in the midst of many gazers, and humbly confessing Jesus. To God alone be all the deep gratitude and glory."

Among the first cases of impression at the commencement of his labours in Edinburgh was that of a young woman in service there, who had previously been for a very short time in Mr. North's own service in his days of worldliness, and who went to hear him preach, and was awakened: Mr. North was sent for to see her, but finding that Miss M——, in whose household she was a servant, was a Christian, he said with characteristic humility, "Why send for me? You are far more able to teach her than I am."

Naturally many of his old acquaintances dropped in to hear him preach, men who had been his associates on the moors, at the billiard-table, and at the hunt. An officer addressing him one day, said, "The last time I saw you, you were lying on your back in the hunting-field, your horse rolling over you." One day in Edinburgh a Christian lady, who has long since entered into the joy of her Lord, wrote to ask him to visit her brother-in-law, who had been one of the friends of his godless days. He shrank greatly from it, but intended to do so, when he mislaid the gentleman's address, and could not find it. He was in a cab

on his way to the station, starting for Glasgow, when on putting his hand into one of his pockets he found the lost address. How many would in the circumstances have taken not altogether reluctant advantage of the temporary loss of the address to salve their consciences for the postponement of an unpleasant duty! but Mr. North at once, at considerable inconvenience to himself, put off his departure from town, drove straight to the residence of his former acquaintance, and spoke to him most faithfully and seriously about the concerns of his soul.

Let no one imagine that it cost him no effort to speak thus personally to his fellow-men about Christ. Those who enjoy the stimulus of addressing large and sympathising audiences find none of this natural excitement in speaking to one unwilling listener. Especially is it a trial to do so when the person addressed is in our own position in society, and most of all is it hard for flesh and blood, and "against the grain," as we say, when the conference with an unwilling listener is with a personal acquaintance.

That much honoured and experienced minister of Christ, the Rev. Samuel Miller, D.D., of Glasgow, mentioned to us that once he happened to be on a visit at the shooting-quarters of a friend in the Western Highlands, in a district where Brownlow North had lived a good deal in his godless days. When there, he was asked to see a lady who was on her deathbed, and who, along with her husband, had been an intimate friend of Mr. North's, and

on whom he was conscious that his example and friendship had exercised a deleterious influence. After his conversion he had returned to this locality for the express purpose of trying to undo some of the evil he had done, and to testify for Christ where he had openly served the devil; and among others in the district to whom he was blessed was this lady. When Dr. Miller visited her, not long before her death, she was full of adoring praise to that God who had saved her as a brand from the burning, and who had done so through the instrumentality of one whose influence with her had formerly been all for evil. Thus it was that God gave him back as saved souls for his reward one and another and another of those with whom he had travelled on the broad way; and in his conduct in this has not this servant of God left us an example that we should follow in his steps?

From the date of his conversion Mr. North carried the conscientiousness we see displayed in these instances of seeking to save the souls of his friends into everything that he viewed in the light of duty. He was in the habit of impressing upon young converts the duty of setting before themselves a high ideal of the Christian life from the outset of the heavenly race, and trying steadfastly to walk up to it, to ask God's guidance in all matters, and to seek to do all to His glory.

An incident which illustrates this point happened when he was staying at the hospitable home of his dear friend Mr. Grant of Arndilly. Arndilly is one of

the most beautifully situated mansions in Strathspey, where that fair Northern river, the joy of the angler and the artist, with lordly flow sweeps round the house, beyond the sloping lawn with its hoary timber, that stretches from the Hall door down to the river bank. Mr. North had been laid aside by the doctor's orders from active work for a little, and had gone to Arndilly to recruit his strength. A lady, who was a guest in the house at the time along with him, sends us her recollection of the incident. "Those who were acquainted with Mr. North's counsels to converts will remember how constantly he held up Coloss. iii. 17, as the proper touchstone by which to prove every action: 'Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.' 'If you can do it in the name of Jesus,' was Mr. North's advice, '*do it*; if not, *don't*.' He had a strong desire to try the effect of a little amusement at his favourite pastime of fishing. His conscience was very tender on the subject, and just because he was so fond of it, and never had handled a fishing-rod since his conversion up to that time (this was in August 1860) he asked Mr. Grant's advice on the subject before a large party at luncheon. 'Arndilly, tell me, do you think I should fish this afternoon?' The reply in substance was, 'If you are not able to *fish for men*, and if you think it would make you sooner able to do that, I don't see why you should not. But let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.' Mr. North said, 'Well I will go into my room and ask the Lord Jesus Christ

to come with me, and unless I feel persuaded that He will go with me, I will not go.'" The sequel is told in a letter to my father.

"ARNDILLY, *August 9th*, 1860.

"MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,—I have just got your dear kind letter, and will not go to bed without writing a line. You remember our conversation about 'fishing.' Well, after much thought and some prayer, I felt it was bondage not to go. I felt sure it would do me good, and out I went. With every cast of my rod I seemed to improve in health. The first day I killed a fish—second day none—third day, engaged a man to come with me, and going out about four in the afternoon we killed six, (I four and he two,) and walked and felt a new man in mind and body for vigour and spirits. Fourth day, started after dinner, about four. [The lady whose letter was quoted above, says she went with him that day, and that they had hardly been a quarter of an hour on the river before he had landed two grilse.] Going down a steep bank, I slipped, and broke a sinew in my leg, and was brought up the brae on a man's back, and home in a donkey chair! From the first moment I was able to say, It is the Lord, and to praise, and I am sure that it was His hand in love. I *could not* fall to the ground without His will, and I felt it was His will to stop the fishing, *perhaps;* but of this I am not clear. I have now been laid up a week, with my leg in a thing that keeps it bent, and in a few days I

hope, with the help of a high-heeled shoe, to hobble about. The pain is almost all gone, and I have been out in the donkey-chair, for my room happens mercifully to be on the groundfloor. I do not think my health one bit worse for the confinement, and feel very happy, and the day after the accident I got a letter from a lady in London in distress, praying me to answer her in the 'Revival,' which I shall only do by a line; but her letter stirred me up to write another tract, which is nearly finished, which I have great expectation God will exceedingly bless, and which I feel quite sure I should never have written if it had not been for the accident. I was getting so fond of the fishing, and it was doing me so much good. Oh, do pray for me, dear brother, that whatever the Lord would have me to learn, He will send His Holy Spirit to teach me for Christ's sake; for if He does not, though the book is put before me in the shape of 'accident' or what not, I shall learn nothing aright. I got much pleasure out of Romans viii. 28 and 32 the other day: 'We know that all things work together for good to them that love God,' etc. These things are all so literally true and real, or else there is no truth in any part of God's Word, and as that is not true, it follows *all* is true. And oh what joy and peace thus to receive it! A principal and in your letter a *dashed* word defies me to read. I wish you would learn to write better; but don't put off writing to me till you do; for, hard as they are to read, I can say, 'without dissimulation,' I love to hear

from you, and almost always get some good from your letters. Reid wrote to ask permission to print my last tract in the 'Stirling Messenger,' which of course I gave him. This gives it a large circulation at once, praise the Lord. Most who will read it will be persons more or less concerned about religion. Who can tell the good that may not be done! But would I rejoice as much if it were somebody else's tract? Alas, no. Oh to be unselfish and single-eyed! Pray for me. "B. N."

What with his previous overwork and breakdown in health, and the accident in fishing, he was laid aside for a good many months. Most of his Christian friends who are in the habit of observing the Lord's dealings will probably think that the illness and subsequent accident were both sent in a never-erring Providence for one purpose, to take him apart by himself with his Lord "into a desert place, that he might rest awhile." The soul is apt to receive injury by constant and excessive and exciting work in the Lord's vineyard, and many have had cause to say, "They made me keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept." The God of all grace was pleased thus to hedge up his way with thorns for a season, that he might be preserved from the snares which beset one who is very successful and immensely popular, and that the work of grace might be advanced in his own heart, that so he might be made still more useful to others.

A few months afterwards, and while still forbidden to resume work, he writes to my father: "Need I say how *very, very* much I should have liked to have been able to come to Edinburgh? and I *could* do it, but I cannot see that I could ask God's blessing on going. It would look in my own eyes as if I thought He could not do so well without me, when He can, as He has shown; and may He do so in your midst yet more, and that exceeding abundantly above all that I can ask or think. May the Lord be with you in public and in private.

"Yours ever affectionately,

"BROWNLOW NORTH."

Another instance of his scrupulous conscientiousness may be given. When laid aside through overwork, he went into the premises of Mr. Yapp, the publisher, in London. His friend asked him what he was doing, when he told him he was laid aside, and felt that if he were to preach just now he would die. Mr. Yapp, perhaps thinking that he was over-careful, replied, "Well, then, preach and die." Mr. North, in relating it to a friend, said, "And something has been saying to me ever since that perhaps I should just 'preach and die.'"

When Mr. North came before the public as a preacher of Christ crucified, there were not a few even of earnest-minded Christians who thought that he ought to have lived very secluded for some years, or confined himself wholly to such private efforts to do

good as have been recorded in this chapter. Although a whole year had elapsed since he became a reformed man, before he ventured to open his lips in public, still a year was as nothing to a lifetime spent in serving another master. Opinions differed as to whether he should have remained silent for a longer period after his conversion; but looking back upon his ministry, it will be manifest that he entered upon it just at the right time, so far as man can judge, with regard to the Lord's gracious purposes concerning our beloved land. He was sent a preacher of the stamp of John the Baptist to awaken dormant souls, and break up the fallow ground, and by ploughing deep into men's consciences to prepare them for that flood of blessing which was to follow in the course of two or three years in the Revival of 1859-60. Still the fact that his life was publicly known to have been in opposition to the law of God, if it attracted many from curiosity to hear him, awakened bitter opposition in others, but the Lord so overruled it as to bring good out of this evil.

The late Mr. Hay Macdowall Grant, of Arndilly, has recorded an incident bearing on this point.

One evening Mr. North was about to enter the vestry of a church in one of our Northern towns in which he was going to preach, when a stranger came up to him in a hurried manner, and said, "Here is a letter for you of great importance, and you are requested to read it before you preach to-night." Thinking it might be a request for prayer from some

awakened soul, he immediately opened it, and found that it contained a detail of some of his former irregularities of conduct, concluding with words to this effect: "How dare you, being conscious of the truth of all the above, pray and speak to the people this evening, when you are such a vile sinner?" The preacher put the letter into his pocket, entered the pulpit, and after prayer and praise, commenced his address to a very crowded congregation; but before speaking on his text he produced the letter, and informed the people of its contents, and then added, "All that is here said is true, and it is a correct picture of the degraded sinner that I once was; and oh how wonderful must the grace be that could quicken and raise me up from such a death in trespasses and sins, and make me what I appear before you to-night, a vessel of mercy, one who knows that all his past sins have been cleansed away through the atoning blood of the Lamb of God. It is of His redeeming love that I have now to tell you, and to entreat any here who are not yet reconciled to God to come this night in faith to Jesus, that He may take their sins away, and heal them." His hearers were deeply impressed by the words he spoke, and that which was intended to close his lips was overruled to open the hearts of the congregation to receive his message.

The way in which the startling news that Brownlow North had become a preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ struck his old friends may be gathered from a

single instance of one who was as rejoiced as he was amazed to hear it. The Rev. William Robertson, D.D., of New Greyfriars Church, Edinburgh, thus writes: "My acquaintance with Brownlow North reaches back to the days of our youth, when in the year 1826 we met on the Continent, and travelled for a short time in company. I will say nothing about his early life, as he has frequently in the pulpit taken the public into his confidence in reference to his character and habits in those days, and all who heard him know that in his confessions he did not spare himself, uniformly holding himself up as a remarkable example of the forbearing mercy of God, and the mighty power of His grace. A truly astonishing example he was! The first time I heard of his change of character and life was from a copy of the 'British Messenger' which I found by accident in the coffee-room of an hotel in Hull, where I had just arrived from Rotterdam. Brownlow North preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ! Did my eyes deceive me? Could it be the same Brownlow North with whom I was so well acquainted? What could be the meaning of his preaching? Was it some mad or impious jest? What could have tempted him to this? Very naturally I had no belief in his sincerity until shortly afterwards we met in Edinburgh, when he recounted to me the remarkable history of his conversion. From that moment I never entertained a doubt that he was a truly converted man. I shall never forget an observation of his when he perceived the astonish-

ment, perhaps mingled with doubt, with which I listened to his narrative of his conversion. 'I see you are filled with wonder, William,' he said to me, 'you are filled with wonder. But why should He not? *why should He not* lift the vile thing out of the dunghill?' The rest is well known, and one who has marked with a very attentive eye the progress of late revivals has declared that the ministrations of no revivalist preacher in our days have ever been crowned with such success as those of Brownlow North."

EARLY EVANGELISTIC LABOURS.

" Do not trifle ; earth is groaning
Under wrongs and burdens sore :
Be in earnest ; put thy shoulder
To the work that lies before.

Every hour is more than golden,
Every moment is a gem ;
Treasure up these hours and moments,
There are princely pearls in them."

H. Bonar, D.D.

" I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us ? Then said I, Here am I, send me."—Isa. vi. 8.

IV.

We have seen how Brownlow North was led to the entrance of what proved to be a long and eminently useful course of public evangelistic labours. He felt that the providential indications that this was the path in which the Lord would have him walk were so clear to his own mind, that to have refused to undertake the work would have been to decline the call of God. Most of those who knew him felt as strongly as he himself did that the Lord had need of him to publish the gospel of His grace in the country districts and the towns and cities of Scotland, and the Lord so manifestly accompanied the preaching of the word with signs following, that all doubt was gradually removed from the minds of most of those who had at heart the advancement of the kingdom of Christ in our beloved land. With characteristic energy and throughgoing, whenever he was thoroughly assured in his own mind that the Lord had called him to pass through the towns and villages of the land, proclaiming the gospel which had gladdened his soul and renewed his life, he threw himself enthusiastically into the work, giving up without hesitation his stated home. What to a gentleman of fully middle life was

the undoubted trial of having no certain abiding-place was gladly met by him, and as gladly and cheerfully shared by Mrs. North.

Sir George Sinclair, Bart., of Ulbster, in a valuable letter addressed to the Rev. Dr. Guthrie, of Edinburgh, which was published at the time, after giving a brief sketch of Mr. North's conversion, and his commencement first of private, and then of more public efforts to save souls, details from which we have given to our readers in pages 54, 55, 61, says: "The foregoing unvarnished and interesting narrative presents, I humbly think, a complete vindication of our respected and indefatigable friend from the charge of having intruded himself into the functions of the ministry, and usurping a position to which he had neither claim nor calling. It must be evident, even to the most prejudiced caviller, that he was led on, not only gradually, but reluctantly and unexpectedly, to become a preacher of the everlasting gospel in truth and verity. When he first obeyed the summons to attend the death-bed of a dying Christian, it no more entered into his contemplation that the time was at hand when congregated thousands would assemble from all quarters to hear him, than the prophet imagined, when he entered the shallow stream, that the waters which were only to the ankles would ere long be to the knees, and ultimately reach to the loins. Retaining as I still do my objection to lay-preaching in general, 'what am I that I could withstand God?' (Acts vi. 17,) when in such

an exceptional case as that of Mr. North He is pleased to grant such unequivocal and uninterruped tokens of His countenance and presence? I trust that when these details have been dispassionately and impartially considered, many excellent and estimable persons who previously entertained serious objections, or at all events conscientious doubts, as to the lawfulness or desirableness of the line which our friend has been led to adopt, will 'hold their peace and glorify God' (Acts xi. 18)."

This testimony of Sir George Sinclair was an important one; and those must be few indeed who having been privileged to listen to his addresses, could, whatever other faults they might impute to him, possibly charge him with having rushed rashly or presumptuously, impelled by some merely carnal motive, into the position of a preacher, to which his Master had not called him. So solemn did he feel the post even of a lay-evangelist to be, that we are sure all his most intimate friends will bear us out in the assertion that nothing but a convincing and almost overpowering sense of his having been called or thrust forth by his Lord to "preach the word" would have induced him to stand up and plead for his God with his fellow-men. For hours before ascending the platform or pulpit he was weighed down with a sense of the greatness of the responsibility of addressing sinners in the name of the Saviour, and none can say that in the discharge of his duties he was ever light-hearted. His abiding

impression was that a dispensation of the gospel was committed to him, and that woe would be to him if he did not preach the gospel. He felt he owed a debt, not only to the Saviour who had washed him in His blood and pardoned his many sins, but to sinners around him who had a right and a claim to the sinner's gospel; a claim to have it declared to them and pressed upon them with all fulness, freeness, and forcibleness by one who had himself experienced its saving power. This was the debt which in the strength of God he now set himself with all his energy to discharge, and in the zealous discharge of which great trust he continued to his dying hour.

After having begun to preach in the Free Churches of Dallas and Forres in the beginning of July, 1856, Mr. North was invited and consented to preach in many of the churches in Morayshire and the adjoining counties. In August of that year he went to Fortwilliam and the district of Lochaber, in which neighbourhood he had held shootings for some years, and preached with much power both in the Established and Free Churches, creating among the people who had known him in his careless days a deep impression, and awakening among them a serious concern about Divine things. In October of that year he preached in different churches in the town of Inverness, thereafter at Petty, Auldearn, and Nairn, returned again to Inverness in November, and visited the towns of Forfar, Montrose, and

Aberdeen in the last months of the year. Wherever he went, the Lord accompanied His word by awakening the careless, and arousing the sleeping. Written statements by ministers of the Established, Free, United Presbyterian, and Independent Churches all testify to the deep impression made upon their congregations by his message.

Nearly twenty years had passed since the last revival in Scotland under William Burns, at a time of deep spiritual thought which may be said to have been a preparation for, and to have culminated in, the ever-memorable Disruption of the National Church in 1843. Strangers from England and America often seem to suppose that there is so much religious knowledge and spiritual life in Scotland as to leave no room for anything like a deep or widespread religious impression. No idea could be more erroneous than this. Religious knowledge is not, alas, at all the same as spiritual life, and is not unfrequently found in an unnatural separation from it: even in regard to the former it is the simple fact that both at the time when Brownlow North began his evangelistic work, and at the present, there is a very large amount of ignorance, both of the letter of the Word of God and of the doctrines of grace. This ignorance prevails especially in certain districts of our land, namely, those which were under the deadening influence of Moderatism in the latter part of the eighteenth and the earlier part of the nineteenth century, in some of which there

had been no general spiritual movement since the Reformation. Indeed, the state of Scotland in regard to Divine things, over a pretty large extent of her territory, was very lamentable, and two sins, viz., those of drunkenness and immorality, had given her a sorrowful prominence among Christian communities. The former, through the falling off of the rural population, the introduction of railways, and the consequent superseding and suppression of wayside inns and public-houses, is now chiefly confined to cities, towns, and large villages, while the latter is more prevalent—at least in some of its forms—in the strictly rural districts. To a certain extent its prevalence may be traced to the absence of proper house accommodation for our agricultural population, to the indiscriminate subsidising of the mothers of illegitimate children by the Poor Laws, to the draining away of the more enterprising and thoughtful portion of the youth into our large cities, and to distinctions of race; but there can be no doubt that its most inveterate root is simply irreligion, and it is remarkable that the divisions of the country in which this sin is most flagrant, and in one of which Brownlow North began his evangelistic labours, are precisely those which had lain for a very long period under the sway and blight of moderatism, which was simply the rationalism of a former age. It is noteworthy that this rationalism, which prided itself on confining its preaching to legalism and morality, ignoring faith, free grace, and the work of

the Spirit, was not able to produce that virtue which it so extolled, and bent itself wholly to cultivate.

It shows us in a practical instance that the gospel of God's grace is the only way of holiness, as well as the only way of salvation. This grace of God, exhibited in all its fulness by this novel and powerful preacher; this gospel of God, containing the good news of a Divine Redeemer, all-necessary and almighty to save, and of a Divine Spirit, all-necessary and almighty to sanctify, burst upon many individuals, many families, and even many congregations, as an altogether new discovery.

His public ministry, like his private labours, was fruitful from the very first. A gentleman writes to Mr. North, that his visit had produced a deep impression in his own household. "The two nurses, I am happy to see, continue to evince much earnestness, the other two maids are also evidently enquiring, and the men-servants have become greatly sobered down and subdued. On Sabbath, instead of their wonted frolicsome and light habits, they are now found reading the Bible and religious books. This in a 'bothy' is a step certainly in the right direction. We are making a very feeble effort to foster these sympathies by having a very interesting little prayer-meeting in our house." The Rev. John Whyte, minister of Moyness parish, wrote to him in December, 1856: "So far as I can ascertain, the movement among some of the young folks here is very cheering and hopeful, affording cause of

gratitude and praise. Your labours have evidently been blessed of God, and I should be very wishful to widen and extend the movement. With that view I intend addressing the young persons in the congregation on Sabbath first, urging the importance and necessity of the new birth."

From the very first Mr. North was made a means of quickening and reviving to the Lord's children, as well as of awakening to the lost, and was used as an instrument for bringing many into the full assurance of their interest in the Saviour. On the 18th December, 1856, a blacksmith in one of the towns he visited wrote to him: "I am desirous to express the sense of gratitude which I feel for what of the Lord's goodness I have experienced through your instrumentality. I trust it was a day of the Spirit's power to my soul. I have had such clear views of the glory and excellency and suitableness of Christ Jesus to the sinner's case, and of my personal interest in Him as my own Saviour, that I have been enabled to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and with the great Apostle of the Gentiles I have sometimes had a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better. I have known more of what it is to have the full assurance of faith for the last four months than I ever did in all my past life. Surely a believing sense of the presence and favour of God enjoyed is heaven begun on earth; and although I have heard you preach in Forres, in Rafford, in Dyke, in Kintessae, in Boghole, in Nairn, and

Auldearn, still I want to hear you again, and I know there are hundreds here equally anxious to hear you."

Of his first appearance as an evangelist in Huntly, where he had spent some of his godless years, as already referred to, the Rev. Mr. Williamson writes: "The first time he spoke at Huntly I well remember. The Duchess of Gordon had asked him to visit her, and he agreed to address my weekly meeting for prayer. The attendance was very large, from anxiety to see one who had been so notable in all the ways of folly in the neighbourhood in other days. When he stood up, he was greatly moved, and said, 'My friends, you all know me; you know how I have lived in other days; but God——' Here he was so overcome that he had to sit down, and was overwhelmed with a flood of emotion. After a little he twice again tried to speak, and failed, and indeed was unable to address the meeting. Towards the close of the meeting he led in prayer, thanking God for His wonderful mercy to us all, and especially to himself."

On the occasion of his first visit to Aberdeen at the very outset of his ministry a lady who had known him well in his thoughtless days went to hear him preach with much prejudice, and through his message was brought to the knowledge of the Lord. It was also on this visit that he was the means of the conversion of two students who afterwards became ministers of Christ, the Rev. James

Collie, of York, and a fellow-student who is now labouring in the Cape Colony.

On this occasion also his words were made a means of blessing to a young lady whose life has since been devoted to advancing the Saviour's kingdom in the foreign mission field. Were sufficient space at our disposal, it would not be unprofitable to give her very full notes of Mr. North's dealings with her and two of her young friends at this time. Of these we can only give an abstract. She had reason to believe that she had given herself to the Lord a few weeks before hearing Mr. North in Gilcomston Free Church, Aberdeen, in Dec. 1856; but in her case the work was greatly deepened, while her friends J. and M. F. were then for the first time savingly awakened and led to Christ. She writes: "I was struck and startled with the faith of his first prayer. I thought, What is my religion worth? I can't say 'Father' to God, as that man does. His text was Acts xvii. 12, 'Therefore many of them believed.' There was much of the power of the Holy Spirit with him that evening; and as he went on it was all to me so tremendously real and present, I felt as if I had never believed before that the Son of God really came down and died for sinners. At the close he entreated us all most earnestly to speak to Jesus there and then. He cried, 'Oh, speak to Him! If you can say nothing else, tell Him that you hate Him, but speak to Him as you are.' I remember well hiding my face in the pew, and saying that to

Him in deepest grief, and begging Him to change me. Next Sabbath his text was Prov. i. 20—33. In opening up the clause, 'Fools hate knowledge,' he brought together one after another of the Bible descriptions of fools, and applied each most impressively; *e.g.*, the atheistic fool of Psalm xiv., the rich fool of Luke xii. 20, the self-confiding fool of Prov. xxviii. 26, and the backsliding fool of 2 Peter ii. 22. As he described the backslider, and said, 'You are only a fool after all, and now Christ is saying to you, "Turn you at my reproof, behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you,"' I broke down, and turned to Christ to beg to be received, and to ask His Spirit. The following evening my two friends and I went to his lodgings at the hour when he intimated he would be at home. He prayed with us first, then spoke pointedly to each, setting Christ before us from Rom. iii. 21—26, in His righteousness and death and power to save. He gave us Christ's invitations and promises, but we could not believe. I asked, 'Has one a right to believe that Christ loves one personally?' He answered quickly, 'If you don't believe that, you will go to hell,' and read to us 1 John iv. 16, 'We have known and believed the love that God hath to us.' He asked, 'Are you willing to forsake all for Christ? to give up the world, its pleasures, companionships, etc.,' and rapidly grouping up a list of trials for Christ, he asked me in his own direct, forcible way, 'Could you bear that?' and I said, 'I think I could.' He answered, 'You remember Peter,

he thought he could, and what did he do?' He put the same question to J. F. She did not answer at once, and he said, 'Remember, it is not to me that you say it, but as you must answer at the judgment-seat of Christ.' She answered 'Yes,' very solemnly, and Mr. North turned to her younger sister, M. F., with the same question. She answered 'Yes,' and he added, 'Remember the young ruler.' He said, 'Don't expect to be perfect Christians in five minutes: you must be babes first, and then grow, feeding daily on the Word.' He spoke with evident delight of some of the rich portions of the Word, and said, 'Is not that food?' He talked with us of pardon, and acceptance, and victory over sin, and the welcome at last, 'Well done, good and faithful servant,' and bade us meet at least once a week to read and pray together, which we did for some years, till our paths in life separated. The servant came a second time to say that many more were waiting to be spoken with; and warning us not to lose our convictions, he bade us farewell, saying, 'God bless you, my dear sisters!' Next day I called again to see him, when, after further instruction and encouragement, he read Romans x. 1—4 with me, reading my own and my friends' names in place of 'every one' and 'they,' and prayed very earnestly for each of us." After this the writer of the above sketch went through a period of deep spiritual darkness and conflict, which the Lord graciously dissipated in His own time. Her friends received full peace while conversing with

Mr. North on his second visit to Aberdeen, a few months later. At that interview he said, "The Lord has His own way of leading us all; but when He gives you comfort, don't be afraid to take it." "He spoke to us," she continues, "like a father, and bade us work for the Saviour, even when we felt unwilling, saying, 'When I first began to visit and speak for Christ, I did not like it. There were nasty smells in poor people's houses, and I hated to go. I thought, I can't make myself like it, but I can make myself do it, and as I went on I grew to like it, and now I am as happy as the day is long.' I met him again afterwards, more than once, and he always had some message that was a help to me. He never lost his warm interest in us; and after I had come abroad, he sent me a copy of each of his works as they were published, inscribed with select verses."

The effect which Brownlow North's appearance on the platform and pulpit produced in Scotland was altogether electric. The striking contrast of the work into which he now threw himself with all his wondrous energy to the pursuits of his youth and manhood was alone sufficient to attract notice. Added to this there was the intense earnestness of the man, the natural eloquence which he possessed, the originality of the mode in which he presented truths which had nothing of novelty in themselves, the response which his appeals elicited from ten thousands of hearts, and the hundreds of cases of awakening and conversion that took place under his ministry,

which all combined to turn towards him the eye both of the Church and of the world. We cannot do better than transcribe to our pages the descriptions of his preaching and labours given in the newspapers of the day, when the impression was freshly struck upon the hearts and minds of our countrymen.

In an account published in one of the northern journals of the first sermon which he preached in Banff, the writer says: "I was prejudiced in the extreme against Mr. North, but I listened with astonishment and pleasure. So many in this locality must remember him leading so different a life, mingling among so opposite a class of associates, that it is strange for them to listen to him now, and believe that all is genuine and real. But we must remember God's ways are not as our ways, and the instruments He uses for the accomplishment of His designs are often the very opposite of those that men would have selected. He spoke as one just escaped from the sacked and burning city, with the roar of the flame and the yell of the dying still fresh in his ear, full of gratitude for his wonderful escape, yet still looking back amazed and fearful. We think it was Garrick who, on being asked how he and his friends kept the listeners in rapt attention, when the preacher with a subject so great, so vast, acted too often more as a soporific than anything else, replied, 'We speak as if our fictions were truth, they as if their truth were fiction.' Here is the secret, and certainly in Mr. North's whole manner

and address you see a man thoroughly in earnest. He has nothing of the calm eloquence of a Caird, or the chaste flowing elegance of a Tulloch, but still under God's grace he is a most useful man. He is now a light set upon a hill, and we earnestly trust he may long be spared to burn with a bright effulgence, illuminating the narrow path to many a wearied pilgrim."

Another newspaper thus describes his first address delivered in the town of Stirling. The meeting was held in the Free North Church. "All ranks in the town and all denominations had their representatives in that large assembly. It was an interesting concourse of all kinds of people, all eager to hear what the remarkable stranger would say. After giving out part of the forty-fifth Psalm to be sung, engaging in prayer, and reading the eighth chapter of Proverbs, he announced as the subject of his discourse the latter half of the first chapter of that book, which he handled with great ability and impressiveness. The intense earnestness of his manner, indicative of the deepest feeling of compassion for the perishing, was obviously the grand secret of his tremendous moral power. The most common truths appear to be unheard-of realities, because they are manifestly the utterance of a mind to which they are real, present, and momentous, and they enter many a startled ear because pronounced with burning lips as a message from the Majesty of heaven, the reception or rejection of which might there and then decide the eternity of those hearing. The great source of all

spiritual success is doubtless the Holy Ghost, but, humanly speaking, the delivery of acknowledged and elementary truth in an agony of earnestness will never fail to arouse, rivet, and impress a Scottish congregation."

Another journalist inserts a very discriminating article under the heading of "Great Preachers: Mr. Brownlow North." He classifies the great preachers whom the Lord has from age to age raised up in His Church into three divisions. In the first he places Jeremy Taylor, Massillon, Hall, and Chalmers, men whose original and sublime conceptions fire the train of emotion, who are great thinkers and literary artists. In the second class he ranks those who primarily appeal to the reflective consciousness, and whose power resides in the originality and moral pertinence of the thoughts which they utter. As examples of this class, he cites John Howe and John Foster. In the third class he places those, the secret of whose power lies in the vividness of their spiritual realizations, and the intensity of their spiritual emotions. In them thought, affection, fancy, all live and play in the burning fervour of the spiritual life. The influence of the last class is the widest and most direct of all, because they address themselves to elements which are found in the universal heart of humanity. The audiences of the first two classes are to a certain extent select, that of the third embraces all men. He gives George Whitfield as the best known instance of this class of preachers, and says, "The black faces

of the Kingswood colliers, furrowed with the tears of a pungent spiritual emotion, bore testimony to Whitfield's power at one extreme, and the pockets of Benjamin Franklin, emptied at his resistless appeal, bore testimony as striking at the other. Within the last few days large numbers of our citizens have had opportunity of hearing a preacher of the same order as Whitfield. All the distinctive elements of Whitfield's power, as we are led to infer them from the effects of his preaching, are found in Mr. Brownlow North. The prime characteristic of such men is a simple, direct, realizing, all-absorbent faith. They believe, and therefore speak. They live in as close relation to the spiritual world as the mass of men do to the sensible. An immense majority of mankind in all ages have lived by sense, a few live by reflection; but the knowledge of our relation to God is not to be acquired in either the one way or the other. It is faith only that can transcend the perplexities that beset an attempt to realize God's moral character from data so anomalous as this world presents. The reflective life is noble compared with the life of sense, but the life of faith is far nobler." Regarding a believing realization and presentation of the unseen as Mr. North's great gift and power, he concludes, "Blind must be the eye that does not recognise the Divine hand in a man so transformed and inspired. In an age of prevailing pharisaism, spiritual stupor, and practical infidelity, we hail in his mission a fresh proof that God has not forsaken the earth. Our

gratitude need not be the less, but the greater, that we recognise the adaptation of the human medium to the Divine power. The earthen vessel is not picked up at random that is charged with so precious a treasure, and let us feel assured that it is by no accident, and through no random craze of enthusiasm, that Brownlow North, whom hundreds amongst us knew but yesterday as at once the genius of sport, the charm of drawing-rooms, is now the great preacher of the cross of Jesus Christ, on whose lips thousands hang, and to hear whom more struggle in vain for admittance." It may be noted that he attracted and interested these multitudes without ever uttering a sentence intended or fitted to amuse them, or to distract their attention even for a moment from the absorbing theme of his message.

Brownlow North's personal appearance was one that was likely to imprint itself on the memory of all who ever heard him preach, and the frontispiece of this volume gives a fair idea of it to those who never saw him. Somewhat under middle height, he was of portly form, deep-chested, broad-shouldered; his address was gentlemanly, and his bearing aristocratic. His manner in private as well as in public was marked by dignity and gravity. Though he dressed in dark clothes, generally in black, his attire was that of a country gentleman, and was not in any way ministerial or professional. He used an eyeglass in reading. His lower jaw was square and heavy, and his forehead, lighted up by the glancing eye, was well

developed and thoughtful. He had a massive head covered with curling locks of very dark hair, afterwards tinged with grey; the cast of his countenance, which was well seen from the absence of any hair on his face, was also massive, and his features, though by no means handsome, were striking and impressive, and in his dark and sparkling eye there dwelt earnestness, penetration, and gentleness. The physiognomy is considered by good judges to bear the impress of the history and the character of the man; and while those who trusted to their powers of thus reading character could doubtless detect in his features and expression the stamp of an average lifetime spent in the fashionable world and in the service of self and sin, they could hardly avoid also seeing clear traces of the great change which at the age of forty-five was wrought upon him, and of the Divine life and the new nature which, then implanted within him maintained a life-long and successful conflict with the old. A minister, who had known him before his conversion, when he heard that he was a changed man, and had begun to preach to sinners, said to a friend, "Well, if he is to do any good, he will require a reformed face as well as a reformed life," and we are told by some who knew him previously that after his conversion the whole expression of his face became changed to a very striking degree.

The general cast of his countenance very strongly recalls the pictures of the great Luther, to whom in his energy, his faith, his boldness, his views of Divine

truth, and even in the dogmatical cast of his mind, he bore a very marked resemblance.

One day the late Professor Duncan remarked to a friend, as he looked at a good photographic likeness of Brownlow North that was hanging in her drawing-room, "There is intellect in the brow, genius in the eye, and eloquence in the mouth."

His opening prayer always had a solemnising effect on the congregation, and though the language was unconventional, it had no lack of real reverence and holy awe, and was the expression often of Jacob-like wrestling with the great God for a blessing upon the souls of men. We here insert one of these prayers, which was taken down in Elgin (in 1862).

"Lord God Almighty, Thou who dwellest in the heaven of heavens, Thou who revealest to us that 'Wherever two or three are gathered together in Thy name, there Thou art in their midst,' O God, help us to pray! We have stood up before Thee in the attitude of prayer; we have ourselves invited Thine attention by our own act and deed in coming unto Thee; we have called upon Thee specially to regard us at this moment; and O God forbid that, when Thine eye is turned upon us, Thou shouldest see a single heart amongst us that is not endeavouring to pray. It is so hard a thing to pray, that, except Thou pour upon us the spirit of grace and supplication, we never shall pray. O God, before we can pray we must feel want; we must feel that we are poor and needy; O grant us then to feel our need! grant us that hungering and thirsting which Thou hast promised to satisfy. O God, unless Thou create the desire, there will be no desire, for the natural man desireth

not God. Is it witnessed of us all in heaven, 'Behold, he prayeth'? Thou knowest, Thou knowest. O God, if there be one here who is not praying, we, Thy praying people, remembering Thy commandment to love our neighbour as ourselves, would join as one man and pray for the prayerless. We pray to Thee, O God, we who do pray, pray to Thee to make the prayerless pray. May the prayerless be compelled to smite upon their breasts, and cry, 'God be merciful to me.' May they join now, O God, with the praying ones, and may there not be one here of whom it is not witnessed, 'Behold, he prayeth.' Now, Father, we want everything; we want Thee to take away from us all our own things—everything we have got, so that we may have nothing we can call our own, that all those things which we have by nature may pass away. Then we pray that all things may become new, and that all these new things may be of Thee. And then we pray to Thee, Father, that, being led by Thy Holy Spirit, we may sacrifice to Thee all Thine own. We pray that we may have faith that we may have true love shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. We pray Thee that we may have joy and peace in believing. We pray Thee that we may be filled with the Holy Ghost, that the fruit of the Spirit may be manifest in us—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance—so that men shall be obliged to take notice of us, that the Spirit that is within us is not the spirit of the world, but is a new spirit, even the Holy Spirit, and that we have been with Jesus. Now, Father, we do not ask this of Thee as a mere form. We believe that Thou art. We believe that we have access to Thee by one Spirit, through Jesus Christ, and we come through that new and living way; and though we cannot use proper words to express our need when we pray to Thee, O forgive us what we are, and make us what we ought to

be. It is not for much speaking that we ask Thee to hear us. We do not feel our need, neither know we how to ask for anything, as we ought; but what we ask Thee to do in the name of Jesus is to supply all our need, to make us living members of the Lord Jesus Christ, producing very much fruit to Thy honour and glory, and to make us blessings to the land in which we live. We need Thy blessing, Father—Thy blessing and the light of Thy countenance,—that Thou teach the speaker to speak—that he speak by the power of the Holy Ghost, not in word only, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. O may the dead be awakened this night by the entrance of Thy word which giveth light, and may those who have light have it more abundantly; and may it be evident that Thou canst take the weak things and the base things, and make them instruments in Thy hands, when it so pleaseth Thee, to do good. O may good be done, and no evil, and good above all we can ask or think. Accept us, not for our prayers, but because we ask it, most merciful Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen."

His speech on first rising to address an audience was diffident and laboured, but gradually became more flowing, except towards the climax of his appeals, when words seemed sometimes wholly to fail him. His language was always simple, natural, scriptural, and was used for the sole purpose of conveying his meaning in the clearest manner to his hearers, without any thought of either rules or flowers of rhetoric, although he was a natural orator, a gift which he probably inherited. He always threw his whole soul into the subject he was treating of, and was so evidently interested, impressed, and moved by

it that he could not but communicate some of the impression on his own spirit to his hearers.

Having read his text, or the passage he was about to lecture from, several times very slowly and solemnly, emphasizing almost every word, he entered at once into his subject, gaining the attention of his audience at the outset, and retaining it in an ever intensified degree to the close.

The truths he expounded were usually the leading doctrines of Scripture; these he apprehended very vividly in his own mind, handled with a master's force, and presented to the intellect, conscience, and will of his hearers in a way that was always striking, and often had the charm of originality as well as power. He quoted Scripture with great aptness and effect, appealing to its testimony in every argument and exhortation. His sermons or addresses were all carefully studied and prepared, but were not written out—far less committed to memory. His thoughts were written carefully on the margin of his Bible, or on blank pages of interleaving, while the heads and leading ideas of each lecture or address were jotted down on small slips of paper. Some of his sermons were frequently delivered and seemed engraved upon his very soul.

The form of his discourses was objected to by some critics at first as not being run in the conventional mould of the "sermon," but it must be remembered that they professed to be "addresses"; and the very fact that this criticism was once and again publicly

made proves, what was the case, that they were really "sermons" in everything but the form; and if they were not presented in the form of sermons, they were conceived and delivered in the form of the "lecture" or exposition, which has always held a leading place in the Scottish churches as one of the most popular and most useful forms of pulpit discourse. They were indeed much fuller of doctrine than the "lecture" or exposition usually is, and this was no doubt the reason why some persons would have expected to find them exhaustively arranged into "heads" and subdivisions. Probably his command of his subject and method of orderly arrangement of the topics increased rapidly with constant practice; for we cannot say that when he first visited Edinburgh in 1857 we observed any lack in these respects, although he did not formally announce divisions, but took naturally the points that successively presented themselves to his mind as being taught in the scripture he was expounding, confining himself usually to the leading topics; and hardly touching upon those that were subordinate. He chiefly addressed himself to the unconverted, whether openly godless or self-righteous, and to slumbering Christians; and so little did he beat about the bush in his exhortations, that a lady once remarked that "he spoke as if people never said their prayers or read their Bibles."

In one of the towns in the North of Scotland, soon after he commenced his public labours, there was a minister who had the welfare of his flock much at

heart, and who, seeing how Mr. North's labours were blessed, gave him the use of his church, and often listened to him with pleasure himself, but constantly remarked, "O Mr. North, if you would only study more, you would do still more good." "What sort of study do you mean?" was the reply; "for I devote three hours every morning, before leaving my room, to reading the Bible and to meditation and prayer, and during the day I think of Divine truths as much as possible." "Oh," said the minister, "that is all well; but if you would arrange your addresses with more method, they would be more instructive." "Well, as you advise it so strongly, I will try what I can do before next Sunday." And accordingly he did meditate much upon the arrangement of his next address, so as to put it into a more "connected form." Sunday arrived, and a great crowd of hearers assembled, so that every space for standing as well as sitting room was occupied: and after praise and prayer he commenced his address. For the first five minutes the ideas that he had arranged came out in nice order, when suddenly his chain of thought was broken, and all he had intended to say passed entirely from him, and a dead silence ensued. It was a trying moment, and most men would have found it overpowering. Not so Mr. North. He knew that his mission was not of man, and did not depend on the method in which his discourses were arranged, but on the power of the Holy Spirit. He therefore frankly told the congregation of the advice he had received; of his

endeavour to follow it, and his complete failure, as the whole train of thought had passed away from his mind. "But," he added, "there is one subject that has not passed away, and that is that many of you are sinners ready to perish, and I know the way whereby you may be saved, and it is the true way, because it is God's way." He then delivered a most powerful address as the Spirit gave him utterance, which was much blessed to several of those who heard him.*

One of the newspapers, in describing the effect of his preaching at that time, either in this or one of the other northern towns, says in a leading article: "We have often witnessed, and experienced too, the influence of that spell with which Chalmers, and Guthrie, and Candlish, and Gough have been able at times to enchain their hearers, but we know not that we ever listened with more intense interest to any man than we did to Mr. North on Monday evening, or ever beheld an audience more completely under the power of a speaker's eloquence. Both intellect and heart were addressed, and apart altogether from the nature of his subject, his address on that evening could not fail to have proved a treat to every intelligent and right-thinking hearer. Few present, we believe, were unmoved."

Mr. Gordon Furlong met him when preaching in Aberdeenshire, and induced him to come South, and the Rev. William Reid, then editor of the *British*

* This incident is recorded in Mr. Grant's Book, "Abounding in the Work of the Lord."

Messenger, hearing him in Forfar, also urged him to extend the area of his labours, and gave a notice of his work in that periodical, which had the effect of drawing the attention of the general Christian community to this new evangelist.

He came accordingly from the North, where he had been giving addresses in different towns, to Edinburgh, and preached, if we mistake not, first in the church of his old friend Dr. William Robertson, of New Greyfriars, who asked his congregation to assemble half an hour before the usual time to secure their places, and who says that when he entered the church, and looked round, he found that his precautionary advice to his flock had proved of no avail, as he could only observe some half-dozen of them who had been able to gain admittance, so great was the crowd, and so early had all the available space in his church been filled. He next preached in my father's church, Free St. Luke's, and I can never forget my astonishment, one day during the previous week, when my father told me that the fashionable-looking gentleman whom I had seen in conversation with him was to preach in our church on the evening of the following Lord's Day, and it took some time before I was convinced that there was not some mistake about the matter. It seemed as if things were being turned upside down.

The Edinburgh correspondent of a provincial newspaper thus gives a journalist's impression of his first visit to the Scottish metropolis in March, 1857 :—

"Brownlow North, Esq., a connection of the great Lord North, and hitherto a gay and careless 'man about town,' has been preaching in various Free Church and Baptist pulpits during the week. On Sunday evening he held forth in Dr. Candlish's church to one of the largest audiences it ever contained. He is a man apparently about forty years of age, as destitute of pulpit airs as when he was a leader of fashion and a keen hand for the turf: but in spite of his short shooting-coat, and the negligent tie, and the gold eye-glass dangling on the breast of his tightly buttoned coat, there is tremendous energy and force in his preaching. There is something contagious in a man who is terribly in earnest. North begins his service with a low, faltering voice; but before he has got half through the opening prayer, his breast begins to heave with a convulsive sobbing, his whole frame is agitated, and the tears stream over his cheeks. There is then no faltering. The words come quickly, and all the graces of a natural orator are developed. He becomes a great example of the truth that there is no teacher of elocution like the heart. When he implores the audience, with tears, to forget all about the messenger in the message; when he graphically sketches the position of the gay worldling, evidently picturing from experience, but scarcely ever alluding to his own past career; when he breaks out abruptly, in the middle of a sentence, with a radiant smile, and states the happy conviction that some souls are being saved; and when, with unaffected simplicity, he asks

the prayers of the congregation on his own behalf, that he may be supported in the extraordinary position in which he finds himself, no unprejudiced spectator can doubt that he is a man in earnest, and that we may yet expect to hear great things of the work which he has begun. The spectacle of such a man in the Presbyterian pulpit is unique. There is a significance in his appearance at this time which affects the future of the Church. As a spur to the regularly educated and regularly appointed ministers, and as a powerful living commentary on some of their most prevalent and fatal defects, Brownlow North seems destined to exercise a wide influence as a reformer. He has the good wishes of every one who has heard him; and Edinburgh is flocking in thousands to his gatherings in the Tabernacle and elsewhere, to see the strange sight of a godless man of sport and fashion transformed into a fiery, weeping messenger of the Cross."

A lady who heard Mr. North when he first came to Edinburgh, says that her curiosity had been excited by hearing of his wonderful popularity in the North, and that she heard him preach his first sermon in Free St. Luke's Church, Edinburgh. She writes: "Well do I remember that day when in the morning your father read Acts ix. 20—29 (the first preaching of the converted Saul of Tarsus), with the remark, 'How soon God can make a preacher!' and prayed that this newly raised-up preacher might have depths of repentance, as a safeguard against his great popu-

larity. Mr. North preached in the evening with a power and originality which riveted all, even although such a statement as 'This church is full of devils' provoked in some a half-smile. Hundreds of times since that evening I have thanked him for his exhortation: 'You say that you pray; but when you kneel down with closed doors, will you believe that Jesus is actually at your side, desiring to bless you?' The incidents of his wonderful conversion were constantly reproduced, not through egotism, but to warn against slighting the motions of the Holy Spirit, or grieving Him away from us. Numbers of his gay friends came to hear him, and even if not converted, were forced to own that it was the finger of God. All who heard him felt that his power did not consist in the words of man's wisdom, but that he spoke what he had learned directly from God through the Word. How often I still turn over in my mind the exhortation so difficult to follow, 'Give self to Christ, and take Christ instead,' and this other constantly repeated text, 'God is,' which might be called his motto."

On one of his earliest visits to Edinburgh he was the guest of Francis Brown Douglas, Esq., ever afterwards through life his attached friend, who gives the following recollections of the beginning of his work in that city:—

"His one object was preaching the Word and gaining souls to the Master. I do not particularly describe the number or character of his addresses, so earnest so solemn, so faithful, so bringing before his audiences

the evil of sin and the way of pardon, and this out of the abundance of the heart, and free from conventiona phrases to which we are so apt to become accustomed. Many a week-evening did we go with him to Free St. Luke's and join the large congregation ; and many a Lord's Day when he was to preach did we see that division of Queen Street, where the church is, literally crowded an hour before the time with expecting hearers, many of whom, after long waiting, had to go away disappointed, not being able to get admission.

At every service there were meetings held for conversation with anxious souls. These detained Mr. North, and he generally came home late and much exhausted. He was an abstainer at that time, and declined all stimulants, although in after years, I believe by medical advice, he did not continue so.

Each morning, during that time, our house had many visitors. Mr. North met them by appointment made on the previous evening, and saw them in succession. We did not know, nor do we know now, who these visitors were, but learned afterwards that several of our own acquaintances and friends had then come to see and converse with him, having received through him as the instrument Divine teaching and impression which remain to this day.

He was very much encouraged by the number who visited him ; and both in reference to his conversation with the anxious and to his preaching he often asked the prayers of Christian friends. 'Think,' he said on one occasion, and emphasising several of the

words which he quoted, 'how much Paul desired the prayers of others, how earnestly he said, "I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in prayer to God for me."' Shortly after this he came one day into the drawing-room, saying, 'How good the Lord is! I have a most interesting young sailor with me just now. He is terribly ignorant, but in great anxiety: he is going to sea to-morrow, and may not be back again for two years.' Then he asked Mrs. Brown Douglas if she could give him some tracts or little books for the sailor. She went to her room to look for some, when he, shutting the door, said, 'Come, let us pray together.' We knelt down, and he offered a very earnest simple prayer, beginning, 'O Lord, how good Thou art! but we are like beasts before Thee.' He prayed that we might approach through Jesus, the only way to the Father, and especially for the sailor-lad, that the Lord would go with him, and be his teacher, and enable him to make a good confession. The lad was about twenty-two years old, and in tears. It was a very solemn and interesting scene.

It was not always that what he thought his best sermons were his most successful ones. Many godly ministers have stated their experience to be the same. One evening he preached from the text, 'Turn ye to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope,' dwelling on each expression. When he came home, he said he had never felt more unfit to preach than that Sabbath evening; it was as if his thoughts were gone and his

mind weak—no power at all in him ; words would not come. Often he had more to say than he could get out, and was obliged to stop from exhaustion, but that night he stopped early, not because he was tired, but because he had nothing more to say. Yet he seldom had so many enquirers coming to speak to him as after that address. Seventeen remained, with whom he had separate prayer and conversation. One young woman, he told us, burst into tears, and said, 'O sir, when you said the devil was blinding our eyes and holding us down fast in chains, it went through me like an arrow ; it was just my case.' On this occasion he shewed us the following, received the next day : 'Sir, excuse the liberty taken by a stranger in thus addressing you, and trespassing on your precious time ; but you love to do good to the souls of your fellow-creatures. You requested the prayers of a praying people : may I, who have no one to pray for me, request your special prayer on my behalf, that God for Christ's sake would enlighten my darkened soul, take from me the hard and stony heart, give me a new heart and right spirit, and loose the chains that bind me to Satan ? While listening to your solemn, beseeching address, the most fearful thoughts took possession of my soul, which if clothed in words would make the most hardened shudder. Oh, pray, pray that I may be converted, sanctified, saved. I am an orphan, and almost alone, with none to whom I can tell my sorrow of heart, and must still remain a stranger even while making this urgent request.

Yours respectfully.' I am not aware whether Mr. North discovered or made the acquaintance of the writer."

Among other subjects which he constantly alluded to in his sermons, was the great controversy whether we are to believe God or our own heart. "Unconverted people," he would say, "follow their own hearts. They do what their own hearts, not what the Word of God tells them. They read, 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth,' but their hearts say, 'Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.' Now what I want God's people to do is just this, to put God's Word where their own heart used to be, and their heart where God's Word was; to believe God's Word, and to do what it bids them; to disbelieve their own heart, and not to follow its teachings and suggestions. Many never begin at the beginning; they work, and pray, and read, and perhaps make a god of their Bible, but they are never brought down to that great truth, I know God as a personal God, and I believe this message, 'By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.' Then urging this humility of spirit, he would say, 'God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble; and see how different the treatment is of the king and of the poor. The king must fall down before Him, but He will deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also, and him that hath no helper.'"

During part of this visit to Edinburgh in the early spring of 1857 he was the guest of the late Mrs.

Stuart, of Annat, Perth, who was that winter residing in Edinburgh, and who often afterwards had him as her guest in her own hospitable home at Annat Lodge. From her house he wrote to Miss Gordon, of Wardhouse, his impressions of the door that was opened to him in the Scottish capital.

"EDINBURGH, *Saturday.*

"MY BELOVED AUNTIE,—I really feel ashamed at not having written for so long, but indeed you would excuse me if you saw how I am pressed. I hardly know what to begin to tell you, but I *do* hope the Lord is with me. I have had to do with many awakened and anxious souls. May *He* own the work, and make the end to be true conversion of the heart to Him, for Jesus Christ's sake! Doors upon doors have opened upon me, and the interest to hear seems on the increase still. Last Sabbath I was in Dr. Candlish's; Monday, Charles Brown's; Thursday, Moody Stuart's; to-morrow, if God wills, (and if He does, may He *exceedingly bless*,) Haldane's old church at half-past two, and Moody Stuart's at night; Friday, Dr. Brown's, the original U.P.; and Sabbath, the 19th, by his own personal request, couched in language I should not like to repeat, at half-past two, (his own usual service,) in Dr. Guthrie's. The wise, the mighty, the learned will all be there: may God be pleased to perfect His praise out of the mouth of me, a very babe in Christ, that am not worthy to be called a babe; but by the grace of God I am what I

am, and I hope *by the will of God* I am *where* I am. Oh what a glorious honour! May I just do so much, and no more than He chooses! Letters have come up from Thurso to Sir George Sinclair, asking him to get me to go over there for the herring-fishing time, when thousands are gathered, and he has earnestly pressed it on me, so that I think it seems a duty to go. Believe me, with much Christian love,

"Your truly affectionate,

"B. NORTH."

After he had left Edinburgh we find a letter to him from Mrs. Stuart, dated 24th April, 1857, in which she says:—

"I rejoice to hear that your dear wife does not think that your health has suffered from your work in the Lord's cause in this city. Your visit to Edinburgh has been a season of refreshing to many, and I trust *that* day will declare that not a few have in consequence been translated out of darkness into marvellous light. How gracious is our God in having made you a savour of Christ here! Oh, may He keep you humble and watchful, and feeling continually that your sufficiency is of God! We had a visit from Mrs. H.'s little governess. Her face was so bright, that I greeted her by saying, 'I don't need to ask how you feel, for your countenance bespeaks peace.' She called, poor thing, to thank us for our kind reception that day when she was in deep waters. I do think she has got a lesson from you to cease from

poring over self, and rather to keep gazing on Him who is made unto His people righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. I enclose a letter, and shall not longer intrude on your precious time; but commending you to the God of all grace, and praying that He may bless you and keep you, and cause the light of His countenance to shine upon you,

"I am, ever yours in the Lord,

"JESSIE STUART."*

The Hon. Miss Mackenzie, of Seaforth, in a few lines written in her old age and blindness, on 1st May, 1857, sent him the Levitical benediction of Numbers vi. 24—26: "The Lord bless thee and keep thee," etc. "I wished to send these sweet words of blessing to dear Mr. Brownlow North, with a few words of grateful remembrance, but my blind eyes will not serve. Is not that a sweet word,—

'The Lord shall light my candle, so that it shall shine full bright,
The Lord my God shall also make my darkness to be light.'

PSALM xviii. 28.

May it be yours, and many, many souls be given you. Pray for me, dear friend!

"Yours affectionately in the Lord,

"CHARLOTTE MACKENZIE."

A note from the late Robert Haldane, Esq., of Cloanden, dated 24th March, 1857, brought him the

* It was probably of the young lady here referred to that Mr. North remarked to a friend at this time, "Her face is just like April, sunshine after showers," so sweetly had the shining of the Sun of Righteousness dispelled the cloud of her weeping.

cheering news of blessing accompanying his preaching. "I am sure you will be glad to learn that your address in Mr. Moody Stuart's church on Sunday evening was blessed to a young woman, the daughter of one of the office-bearers in the church of my late father. I also heard of a gay young man to whom the same discourse was blessed, but I do not know the particulars. May the Holy Spirit speak in you and by you to the hearts of many! I feel convinced that before any great good is done, laymen must take a more direct part in proclaiming the way of salvation.

"Very sincerely yours,
"ROBERT HALDANE."

Mr. North owed a great deal to the friendships which he formed with many of the most honoured and most deeply experienced of the Lord's dear children throughout the length of Scotland, who gave him a most hearty welcome from the very outset of his ministry, and threw open to him both their hearts and their homes. Many of them occupying the position of county gentlemen, with time and means at their disposal, became his cordial fellow-labourers in the work of the Lord; the most honoured and blest ministers both in town and country invited him to their pulpits, and guided him by their experienced counsel; while others, like the saintly Duchess of Gordon and the beloved Christian ladies whose letters have just been given, gave him direction in a more

private manner, and no man was more willing to learn from the very humblest of the Lord's chosen ones than was Brownlow North.

We can hardly avoid alluding more particularly to the first of these classes of his friends and fellow-labourers. They formed a body of men so notable and so noble in the stand they were enabled to take, and the work they were enabled to accomplish in advancing the cause and kingdom of the Christ of God in Scotland, and Mr. North owed so much to them, and they in turn owed so much to him, that we cannot but record the names of at least some of them as worthy of being held in warm remembrance by Christ's people in Scotland. It was in the latter part of 1856, and in the early part of 1857, that he formed friendships which were destined to last unbroken through life with Hay Macdowall Grant, Esq., of Arndilly; Sir George Sinclair, Bart., of Ulbster; John Gordon, Esq., of Parkhill; the Earl of Kintore; James Balfour, Esq., W. S., Edinburgh; Francis Brown Douglas, Esq., Edinburgh; James Miller, Esq., Professor of Surgery, Edinburgh University; Charles Christie, Esq., of Durie; George F. Barbour, Esq.; the late Earl of Aberdeen; Alexander Cuninghame, Esq., of Craigends; Reginald Radcliffe, Esq., Liverpool; Edward Caird, Esq. To these were shortly afterwards added Major Ross, of Aberdeen; Admiral Bethune, of Balfour; John Deacon, Esq., banker, London; the Earl of Cavan; Admiral Maitland Dougall; F. Maitland Heriot, Esq., of

Ramornie; Sir Thomas Beauchamp; James E. Mathieson, Esq., London; Sir James Simpson, Bart., and Lord Polwarth.

Of these gentlemen, a considerable number possessed the faculty of public speaking, and, following his example, along with a few others, with whom Mr. North was not quite so intimate, devoted a large portion of their time as lay-preachers to proclaiming to their fellow-men the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The band of Disruption elders raised up in 1843 was a distinguished one; this band of evangelising elders was not less so, and its members did not belong exclusively to any one branch of the Scottish Church. They all proclaimed the same doctrines, viz., those of the Reformation. Men of ability, energy, and intellectual power, some of them men of wide influence in the counties where they held property, others successful professional men, they were all filled with love to the Lord, and fired with zeal for His glory, and for the welfare of their fellow-men, and they consecrated their means, their influence, their time, their gift of public speaking, to the Lord, whom they reckoned it an honour as well as a delight to serve. Eternity alone will reveal what their devotedness and activity have accomplished in Scotland, and we may be thankful that the greater part of them remain unto this present, though some are fallen asleep. They have proved a very valuable gift to the Church from her exalted Head, and one which we trust may be continued.

After finishing a season of fruitful evangelistic labour in the Scottish metropolis, he was invited to Glasgow, and was as highly appreciated and blessed among the teeming population of that great commercial and industrial emporium. The general effects of his preaching may be gathered from the notices in the city newspapers. From one of these we extract the following :—

"Mr. Brownlow North, whose career has excited so profound an interest in the northern shires of Scotland, has been residing in Glasgow for the last two weeks, and preaching frequently on the week evenings, as well as on the Sabbath days. On Tuesday evening last he preached in Free St. Peter's (Rev. Mr. Arnot's). The church was crowded half an hour before the time to commence the services." A column is then devoted to a report of the discourse, which was upon the Parable of the Sower, and which was afterwards published as a tract by Morgan and Scott, London, to which we refer our readers. The report continues : "The discourse occupied above an hour. After giving out the intimations of his further services, he for some fifteen minutes most solemnly and urgently addressed the audience, especially those who had never thought seriously of their salvation. He advised them to favour him thus far, to give ten minutes daily to prayer and to reading God's Word, and to remember that when they read the Bible God was speaking to them, and that when they prayed they were speaking to God. He then

pronounced the benediction, and the immense audience dispersed at a few minutes past ten, many having been above three hours in the densely crowded house." The journal then devotes another column to a judicious review of his preaching and the secret of its astonishing popularity and power. It says that some attributed these to his being a layman, others to his high social position, and yet others to his red-hot earnestness; but the writer says that these were only adjuvants, and not the true source of his power as a preacher, as is proved by many who with all these characteristics have failed to impress their fellow-men. The writer attributes it first to the thoroughly evangelical cast of his preaching, which Mr. North himself often remarked was a powerful attraction, saying that the more faithfully and simply the gospel is preached, the greater will be the crowd that will come to listen, and next to the fact that his theology was scriptural rather than scholastic, drawn from the Bible more than from Confessions. The article further draws attention, and rightly, to the great strength and shrewdness of mind that were apparent in his discourses, to the correctness and aptness of his quotation of Scripture, and to his using popular language, and a style which was pointed, vigorous, and telling. In the way of adverse criticism, the writer said the preacher was occasionally too diffuse, and often abrupt and harsh, but that these features helped to form his individuality, that the harshness was not altogether unuseful to many of his audience,

and that any irrelevancies never led to a departure from the straight logical line of his argument.

In order to gain a pretty complete view of the effect of his visit, we shall add to this testimony of one of the public prints the results of his work in one of the Glasgow churches in which he preached, as attested in private letters by the minister and elders at different dates up to fifteen years from the time of his services. The Rev. Alexander Cumming, the painstaking pastor of Gorbals Free Church, Glasgow, in inviting him back to pay a second visit in 1858, wrote regarding his previous labour, "The good done while you were with us far exceeds any estimate we formed at the time, high as that was. At my April communion, several of the young communicants, examined by godly elders, as well as myself, ascribed their conversion under God to your labours. The same may be said of a number of the young communicants at the October sacrament. Besides these, many others have been awakened under your instrumentality, and nothing will give you a sufficiently vivid impression of their intense desire to hear you again. A young woman came the other day to take seats in our church, and being asked why she left her own congregation, she said, 'Because I found God under Mr. North here.'"

The work appears to have been as full of permanence as of promise: indeed, the stability of those converted under his instrumentality was everywhere very marked. Five years later the same

minister again wrote under the date 5th February, 1863 :—

"My dear Brother,—You may perhaps be anxious to know what were the results of your labour among us, as tested by the lapse of years. They were greater than I had estimated at the time. A good many who were only anxious under my ministry were brought to a decision under your preaching, and having undergone a real conversion, have walked consistently. One or two have died; one woman I attended long in Cumberland Street, who often spoke of the saving benefit she derived from you. She died in great triumph and in the cloudless anticipation of immortal blessedness." Ten years later the same writer was able to state (9th Nov., 1872), "You never preached in Gorbals Church without permanent results ; this one and that one was born there. I have attended several of those who were brought to Christ under your labours when on their deathbeds, and they not only gave the clearest evidence of grace, but shewed unusual serenity in death. Some who had mere convictions under your labours fell away like the stony-ground hearers, but not one whom I really judged to be a converted person."

Other ministers could give a somewhat similar report of the result of his faithful and heart-searching preaching in their respective congregations, and the most valuable testimony is not that which was spontaneously offered a few months after the services had been held, but that which thus attests their effects

after the lapse of fifteen or twenty years, a period of time sufficient to serve as a pretty sure test; for time, as well as fire, tries every man's work of what sort it is. The results of his first visits to Paisley, Greenock, Rothesay, etc., were of a similar character. Regarding the results of his work in the last-mentioned town, we refer our readers to the letters of the Rev. Dr. Elder in chapter xii. His ministry in the West proved as popular and attractive as it had done in the North. In Lochwinnoch, where, in consequence of heavy rains, the road connecting the village with the district lying on the south side of Castle Temple Loch and Barr Loch was covered for some hundred yards with a few feet of water, two hundred persons from that quarter appeared at the meeting notwithstanding this obstacle, having got across the flood by walking along the top of the wall on the roadside. The singularity of this long procession of serious and solemnized worshippers going homewards in the still, gloomy night, marching in single file and with cautious steps along the narrow path of stone, on either side of which lay a wide waste of waters, is well remembered by many in the parish to this day. The impressions produced here also on many hearers were profound and permanent.

Mr. North's work had now attained such proportions as to claim some public recognition at the hands of the Church in Scotland. Within little more than a year from the time when, as he once said in his own pithy language to a little gathering of young men,

he "took Brownlow North from his comfortable seat beside the fire, where he was reading some religious book, and crucified him at the bedside of some poor bed-ridden women," he found himself overwhelmed with invitations to give addresses as the most popular preacher in Scotland.

A Christian relative of his foreseeing such an issue as possible, and dreading the effects of success upon his spirituality of mind, had rather dissuaded him at the outset from preaching, reminding him that when he used to frequent the hunt, it was "first North, then the hounds," and that while he might similarly excel as a preacher, it might prove injurious to him. But by God's grace he was to a marked extent preserved from the snare of pride, and while he was not without faults, he was characterised to an unsual degree by the grace of humility, and was ever ready to receive advice from those whom he esteemed experienced Christians.

Before narrating the action which was taken by the Free Church in the direction of giving him formal recognition as an evangelist, we may give an historical statement of the position which lay-preaching held in the early Scottish Church.

LAY-PREACHING; ITS HISTORY, POSITION, AND WARRANT.

"Wait the appointed time for work appointed,
Lest by the tempter's wiles thou be ensnared;
Fresh be the oil wherewith thou art anointed,
Let God prepare thee for the work prepared!"

AUTHOR OF "OLD OLD STORY."

"Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. And Joshua said, My lord Moses, forbid them! And Moses said, Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!"—NUMB. xi. 27—29.

V.

Several circumstances combined in the providence of God to render the position which Brownlow North occupied before the Christian public, for nearly twenty years, unique in its influence upon the community.

The fact that he was a layman, and not a minister, was one of these. Before his day laymen had done invaluable service to the Church of Christ, and the advancement of His cause in Scotland. Not a few very distinguished laymen had been raised up by the great Head of the Church in our beloved land, men who occupied as high a position in society, who were as truly devoted to the Master, who gave up much that they might obey that Master's call, men of higher intellectual acquirements, if not of so high mental force and calibre; but there were none of these, except the brothers Haldane, whose influence upon the spiritual state of the community as a whole was for a moment to be compared with that of Brownlow North. These noble men were raised up in the different branches into which the Scottish Church had in process of time become divided: the greater number of them were found within the pale of the Free Church of Scotland, through the events that shook the Scottish Church to its inmost core, and culminated in the ever-memorable disruption of that Church in 1843. Their influence, however, was confined, at least during their lives, almost wholly within the bounds of the denominations to which they severally belonged, and

their efforts were directed mainly to the defence and propagation of such great truths and principles as were identified with the public testimony of the Church to which they adhered. From the fact that he was trained in none of the sections of the Scottish Church, but as an Englishman, and the son of an English rector, in the Church of England, Brownlow North obtained and held a position which gave him access to the congregations of each of the Scottish Presbyterian Churches. His membership in his own Church he never relinquished, although in his work in Scotland he became thoroughly associated with Presbyterians, whose form of worship and Church government and doctrinal views he greatly admired and loved. It is not too much to say that such a position had never been held previously by any other, except by the Haldanes in the early part of this century. It gave him a powerful vantage-ground for good, and was recognised by him most thankfully as a talent entrusted to his care by his great Master, and used most humbly and most prudently.

The work to which the other distinguished Scotch Christian gentlemen were called, and for which they were fitted by their Lord with needful gifts and grace, related more directly to the extension of the visible than of the invisible Church, to the organization of Sabbath schools, of missionary agencies, of Bible and tract societies, and even of great churches. When they addressed large audiences, it was either through the agency of the press, or in crowded church courts, and they addressed their audience not on the great theme of salvation, so much as on some of the collateral themes which are its bulwarks. They did indeed concern themselves with matters which most churches allocate almost entirely to ordained ministers, such as Church government, discipline, and rule, while Brownlow North took up the work of an evangelist, and confined himself to the an-

nouncement of the Gospel message of salvation. So far was this from being an encroachment on the peculiar sphere of an ordained ministry, although many objected to it as such, that the simple fact is that the vast majority of Christians, indeed all those who are outside of the Presbyterian Church organization, would have regarded the work done by such men as Alexander Murray-Dunlop, the Earl of Dalhousie, Graham Spiers, Buchan of Kelloe and others, as being an infringement of what they would have considered the peculiar province of the ordained ministers of the gospel, while the work of proclaiming the simple message of peace to audiences larger or smaller, according to the power of the speaker to attract them, would be regarded by them as merely fulfilling the injunction resting upon every believer according to his opportunities and capacities, "Let him that heareth say, Come."

According to the very constitution of Presbyterian Churches, laymen had been recognised as being under a solemn obligation to assist those who were the ordained ministers of the word and servants of Christ and His Church, both in bearing rule in the Church, and in exhorting publicly in matters relating to the everlasting welfare of the hearers. These men, distinct from the settled pastors, were called Elders and Exhorters, the former being ordained to office, and the latter not; but both being recognised by the Church as special gifts vouchsafed to her by her Divine Head, whose services were to be received with all thankfulness, and who were to be held in reputation for their work's sake. It is true that in the larger portion of Scotland the class of Exhorters proved to be a temporary one. This arose from the fact that at its first institution it had assumed very imposing proportions to supply the dearth of reformed ministers in the land, immediately after the overthrow of Popery—proportions in which it could not be expected, and

was never intended, to be perpetuated when parishes were settled under their stated pastors—and partly from the liberty that appears to have been given to the elders, and indeed to all who chose to avail themselves of it, to address the congregation at the meeting called the Weekly Exercise, as enjoined in the First Book of Discipline.

Regarding the office of Exhorters in the Church of Scotland, Dr. McCrie tells us in his Life of Knox, that where there were no ministers, and also in large parishes to relieve the regular minister from part of the public services, certain pious persons who had received a common education were appointed to read the Scriptures, these were called Readers. If they advanced in knowledge, they were encouraged to add plain exhortations to the reading of the Scripture. This formed such a marked and prominent feature in their work, that they were examined before entering on this employment, and were called by the distinctive title of "Exhorters." The reason they were discontinued as an order by the Assembly of 1581 was that they had transgressed the bounds prescribed to them, and had both solemnised marriage and dispensed the sacraments, infringements which no lay-preachers in our day have been chargeable with, except Plymouth Brethren. The office was also considered not an ordinary or necessary office, though an authorised and useful one. Even in discontinuing the order the fullest scope was given to laymen for the use of their gifts at the Weekly Exercise. This most useful meeting was enjoined by the First Book of Discipline to be held weekly in all towns, and all ministers and readers within six miles were instructed to attend (sect. xiv.). The number of speakers each week was to be confined to three, for exposition of the passage and edification of the assembly. They were not ministers or named by ministers; but the meeting was to be "open that all that will may hear and

speak their judgment to the edifying of the kirk." The only limitation was that "no man should move a question which he was not himself able to solve," and that "affectation and vain curiosity were above all things to be eschewed" in the addresses. At the close the ministers and elders were to convene apart, and correct any mistakes in doctrine that might have been made. It was in fact an orderly religious conference, such as those assembled annually at Mildmay, Perth, Stirling, and Brighton; but meeting weekly so that all laymen with any gifts might have frequent opportunities of using them, and presided over by ministers.

Could our Presbyterian Churches do better than revert to the practice of our reforming forefathers, and examine and recognise our lay Evangelists and Missionaries, and re-institute the Weekly Exercise for which the religious life of our day seems to crave?

Institutions essentially the same as the above have continued to exist in the Highlands down to the present day, in the order of "The Men" and in the Friday "Fellowship meeting" held previous to the administration of the Supper of the Lord, and that in the estimation of the most competent judges, such as the esteemed Dr. John Kennedy, of Dingwall, with the most marked advantage to the spiritual life of the people. "The men," says Dr. Kennedy, in his interesting volume on The Fathers of Ross-shire, "were so named, not because they were not women, but because they were not ministers. An unfavourable opinion is entertained of them by some, because they knew them not, and an unfair representation given by others, because they liked them not. They had bitter enemies in the ungodly ministers of many Highland parishes. They were never found to be enemies to due ecclesiastical order, though they failed in learning to submit to undue ecclesiastical tyranny. They were in-

fluenced by no feelings of disrespect to the office of the ministry, nor were they disposed to take a place in the House of the Lord, not given them by the Lord of the House."

The allowing of the Weekly Exercise meetings and of the class of Exhorters to fall into desuetude proved a great loss to the Lowlands of Scotland, under the long supremacy of Moderatism, and the retention or introduction of this Lay agency in the Highland portion of the Church proved an invaluable blessing to these extensive districts, and contributed largely to preserve evangelical life and fervour among them, when the lamp of the Gospel was all but extinguished in the Lowlands.

The wisdom of the founders of the Presbyterian Church in recognising the right of qualified laymen to rule and to exhort is proved by the verdict of time. We now see those who had excluded all but pastors from the government of the Church, such as the Episcopalians and Wesleyan Methodists, hastening to repair their error, as a step essential to their vigour, while Presbyterians, who had, in spite of the injunctions of the great men who founded their system, gradually excluded laymen from the privilege and duty of exhorting, have been forced to avail themselves of their services in an irregular way.

In the formal admission of Brownlow North as an evangelist, the Free Church returned to her old Reformation standpoint, and while she relaid the old foundation of this important order of workmen, she acknowledged the right of her congregations to make trial of the grace and gifts of lay-preachers, for without such preliminary probation and practice her supreme court would never have felt herself warranted in recognising and approving of his services.

At the same time, while Mr. North at least began his labours simply as a lay-preacher, his education for the

Church of England, his ability as a theologian, and his power as a preacher made him occupy quite a peculiar position. In some other respects also his qualifications were exceptional.

Since the time of the Haldanes no lay-preacher appears to have been raised up in this country, gifted on the one hand with equal power to win sinners to Christ, and on the other hand so well adapted by his social position and personal bearing to reach certain classes in the community, who, unhappily for themselves, are less likely than others to hear a faithful and uncompromising testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus. There had been, doubtless, raised up in the land from time to time, a goodly number of God-sent men, who, to use a favourite scriptural expression of Mr. North's, had "added to their faith courage," and in various parts of the country had witnessed a good confession. But it will be admitted that most of these were men unlikely to get the ear of the cultivated or fastidious, or to command attention from rich men of the world. The man who can compel a hearing from the latter class will also get ready audience from the masses of the people, if he can speak with force and plainness of speech; but the uneducated preacher can never, or but seldom, secure as listeners those who look down upon him as ignorant, and call him a ranter. In this aspect Mr. North's life work, after he began to live for Christ, had most important bearings and most blessed results. It did not in any way diminish the value of those labours which men in other and lower strata of society were carrying out in the Master's name, but rather it lifted the work to a higher level; for the force of character and the knowledge of society which Mr. North brought to bear upon his mission called attention to the too much neglected weapons which the Church might wield if she chose to use them, and which in many instances

were rusting for want of use. It is a lesson which has again and again been forgotten by organised churches of all forms of ecclesiastical polity, that office in the Church does not cover and include all the gifts which dwell in the collective body; and forgetfulness of this fact apparently has led over and over again to the assumption of something approaching that sacerdotal exclusiveness which Protestantism expressly resists and disallows. One of the plainest duties of ministers and other official members of churches is the searching out and putting to practical use all the gifts bestowed by the Head upon the various members; and the history of schism and separation would be shorter than it is, had the encouragement and fostering of gifts, and co-operation with those who possessed them, been the rule, rather than frowning jealousy or silent neglect. Instances are not far to seek in which open antagonism to all organised Church systems has been the fruit of unwise interference with men whom the Master had seen fit to bless, or of cold indifference to their labours, or undue distrust of the results of these labours. The Lord does not confine the operations of His Spirit at all times within the usual channels. Brownlow North combined in his own case certain peculiarities which enabled him to force his way to the front as many other men could not do; and in forcing his way to the front he gained a hearing for his message in quarters where formerly it was unheard; and he has made it easier for many evangelists then and since to keep that place and to make that message heard.

Room was made and reserved from the beginning, in the Church of the Old Testament as well as of the New, for the exercise of their gifts and talents by men who had been called by God and qualified by His Spirit, though they lacked the qualifications demanded, and the call formally conferred, by the Church. At the very first constitution of

the Old Testament Church we find two laymen, named Eldad and Medad (Numb. xi. 26—29), on whom the Spirit of the Lord descended, engaged in prophesying in the camp. They do not seem to have belonged to the chosen number of the seventy elders who were to assist Moses in bearing the heavy burden of the government of the Church. It was looked upon by Joshua as an irregularity that ought to be checked; but Moses, more deeply experienced and more taught of the Spirit, told his impulsive assistant, generously jealous of his master's honour, that Jehovah was the only Master of His own house, and that the rules of Church order must, however important, always yield to the higher law of the free working of the Divine Spirit. Moses was a servant in the house of God, and the Master's commission was joyfully acknowledged by him, by whomsoever it was held. From the days of Moses to those of Malachi there was a long prophetic succession. They were formed into a special order, and schools were established for their regular training and oversight in their work, like the colleges and presbyteries of our own days. But while the most of the prophets were thus trained and commissioned in an orderly way, the great Head of His Church reserved to Himself the right of calling a man from the ranks, endowing him with special gifts, and sending him with an authoritative mission to His people. Elijah, Amos, and John the Baptist are notable instances of irregularly trained but divinely commissioned prophets or preachers.

These were instances of men who taught by special inspiration; but the Jewish Synagogue, on the model of which our Presbyterian Church is founded, always preserved the rights of laymen as well as of commissioned teachers to address the people, and the Elders or Rulers of the Synagogue and Rabbis were wont to invite any to address the congregation. It was through this important regulation

that Jesus Christ gained permission to teach in the synagogues; for though He "knew letters," yet had He "never learned" in any seminary, or ever held diploma as a Rabbi, although by courtesy men called Him such. Yet we never hear that free permission to address the people was refused to Jesus by rulers of the synagogue, though He was interrupted more than once by lawless uproar. He says Himself, "I ever taught in the synagogues, and in the temple" (John xviii. 20).

Thus also the Apostle of the Gentiles gained access to the Jewish congregations in all the synagogues of Asia and of Greece; the rulers, as at Antioch, after the reading of the Law and Prophets, sending to the strangers a special invitation: "Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on" (Acts xiii. 15).

The Rabbis and the Rulers of the Synagogue were the successors of the school-trained prophets, and ministers of Christ in turn are their successors. Our order is the prophethood, and not the priesthood; for Jesus Christ assumed the priestly functions entirely to Himself, when He had offered up Himself to God, and entered as our Priest within the veil. Into the Priestly office there was no intrusion, but the Prophetic, though it was in some respects the nobler and the higher, had not a rule so rigid.

The constitution of the Jewish Synagogue, in rule and worship, was the model of the early Christian Church. We there find Ordination, Call, Commission from the Church throughout the Acts of the Apostles granted to ministers as at the present. But we find also laymen, uncalled, and unordained, and uncommissioned, engaged in proclamation of the gospel, and that with apostolic sanction. We are told there came to Ephesus a Jew of Alexandria, named Apollos, a man both eloquent and mighty in the scriptures, who, being fervent in the spirit, spoke boldly in the syna-

gogue, and taught diligently the things of the Lord; and that he mightily convinced the Jews, and that in public (Acts xviii. 24—28). And of the profit that accrued from his ministrations we are told that when he came to Corinth "he helped them much which had believed through grace," and mightily convinced out of their scriptures the unbelieving Jews with whom St. Paul had failed, causing them only to oppose and blaspheme, so that he had left their blood upon their heads, and had gone unto the Gentiles (ibid. 5, 6, 28).

The opinion of many distinguished divines might here be recorded as being in fullest consonance with the constitution of the Jewish Church, and of the Apostolic Church, and of the Reformation Church of Scotland. Of the late very learned Dr. John Duncan of Edinburgh, his biographer records: "Of lay-preaching he had no jealousy, except that it should be sound. 'Every man,' he said, 'has a right to preach, "Let him that heareth say, Come," but he can't oblige you to listen.'"

Brownlow North himself, and he was like Apollos, not only eloquent, but 'mighty in the Scriptures,' in his annotated Bible draws attention to the 8th chap. of Acts, ver. 1, where it is written that after Stephen's death, through stress of persecution the disciples "were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, *except the apostles*," and verse 4, where it continues, "They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word," and adds, "Surely this is in itself sufficient warrant for lay-preaching. What the Christians spoken of in the fourth verse did is clearly the duty of every Christian. The Apostles were not even among the preachers; every member of the Church was a preacher in those days." He refers to the same subject, continued in Acts xi. 19—21, where it is stated that "they that were scattered abroad

upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Antioch, preaching the word and preaching the Lord Jesus; and the hand of the Lord was with them, so that a great number believed;" and notes, "The success of all work for God depends on this, the hand of the Lord being with us. These preachers had no ordination from man; because the hand of the Lord was with them, these lay-preachers turned many."

Mr. Grant, of Arndilly, wrote to his brother-in-law, the late Rev. Robert Aitken, Rector of Pendeen in Cornwall, an Episcopalian clergyman who was greatly blessed by God to the conversion of many, but of rather High Church views, asking his opinion as to the warrant for lay-preaching. In his reply (which is given in Mr. Grant's Memoir, p. 205) he quotes the passage just referred to (Acts viii. 1—4), and in addition says, "The description in 1 Pet. ii. 9, 'Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood,' etc., includes all true believers, laymen as well as clergy; and how can they show forth Christ's praises if they are silent respecting the greatest ground of praise, the salvation of sinners through Christ? Saul entered the synagogue to preach Jesus as soon as he was converted, without waiting for any authority from man. Origen preached before bishops, and he was never ordained. Patrick, Bishop of Ely, was sent forth to preach while at college, before his ordination." Mr. Grant adds as his own commentary on the above, "Woe unto those who allow a brother's blood to rest upon their consciences, when they might have been the instrument of saving him!"

Mr. North held strong and clear views as to the divine institution and authority of the regular ordained ministry. He writes: "Let no one for a moment suppose that I in the least intend to teach that a stated ministry is unnecessary. God forbid. I believe that, next to His Word and His

Spirit, a minister taught by the Holy Ghost is the best gift God has to give us."* He upheld the ordained ministry with all his power, not only honouring the most highly esteemed among them, but magnifying their office on account of the honour of their Master and the honourable nature of their work. While of course he could not co-operate with worldly and godless ministers, and used in private to warn his converts of the danger and the damage to their souls of sitting under an unconverted minister, or one who did not feed their souls with any spiritual food, he never indulged in those general and sweeping denunciations of ministers, or of large classes of ministers, which have too often been uttered by many devoted and useful lay evangelists, and which have irritated congregations and ministers who by a more wise and forbearing conduct might have been conciliated, and not improbably benefited, through their zeal-inspiring services. Mr. North always remembered that the wrath of man cannot work the righteousness of God, and he never allowed private slights, or even personal opposition, to dictate or to tincture any of his public utterances. The grace of God, along with natural prudence, and an overpowering sense of his own responsibility for every word uttered in His name to saints or sinners to that Master who is the Judge of all His servants, and to whom alone they stand or fall, always kept him from forming hasty judgments in this matter, and from giving rash expression to them even when they were formed deliberately. But as a general rule for all, he used very solemnly both in public and private to say, "Do not sit under a lifeless ministry." The fact that while he himself remained a member of the English Episcopal Church (as he stated publicly, when he handed over his Hall in August, 1870, to the inhabitants of Bishop-

* "Ourselves," p. 267.

mill) he had been recognised as an evangelist by the Free Church, and worshipped regularly and communicated in that Church, and was received and welcomed by most of the other Churches in Scotland, and was never desirous or even accused of proselytising, placed him in a position to give this advice with great effect. Frank outspokenness could not demand more, and fidelity to souls, and to the God of souls, could demand no less. Ministers have no reason to be jealous of laymen who share his spirit, even though they may not share his talent. The evils attending undirected lay-preaching, of censoriousness, excitement, spiritual pride, and divisions, will be checked by firm and wise control, better than by opposition or suppression. But the laymen who are working harm at present, and are likely to work more, are not lay-preachers to the perishing, who have usually proved intensely conservative in their views of truth, but those lay-writers on religion in Reviews, in Magazines, and in Newspapers, whose divergences from the received doctrine are not inadvertent but intentional, not trivial but fundamental, and whose aim is not to publish and defend the saving truths of Revelation, but to extend the domain of reason, and overthrow the fortresses of the faith. The Church has urgent need of laymen like Hugh Miller in the press, as well as of lay men like Brownlow North upon the platform.

RECOGNITION OF BROWNLOW NORTH AS AN EVANGELIST BY THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

"Wherefore I dare not, I, put forth my hand
To hold the ark, although it seem to shake
Through the old sinnrs and new doctrines of our land
Only since God doth often vessels make
Of lowly matter for high uses meet,
I throw me at His feet." GEORGE HERBERT.

"Apollos, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus; and being fervent in the spirit, he began to preach boldly in the synagogue; and when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him."—ACTS xviii. 24—27.

VI.

A STRONG desire now began to be felt in various quarters that Mr. North should receive formal Church recognition as an evangelist. Nor is this to be wondered at, especially in view of the parentage of Scottish Presbyterianism.

All the Scottish Churches were scions of the old Reformation Church of Scotland, which had embedded in her very constitution a recognition of the right of unordained men who were called and fitted by God's Spirit, to preach the gospel and to exhort the people in an orderly method. Their mother-Church professed, along with her sister-Presbyterian Churches of other lands, that the outlines of her polity were in harmony with apostolic practice and precept; and the Church of the Apostles recognised the right of laymen to preach the word, as the older Jewish Church of the synagogue had assigned to it a definite place many generations before.

The desire to recognise Mr. North as an evangelist took definite form within the Free Church. It was both fitting and advantageous that this should be the case, for not only had this Church thrown herself with enormous energy, from the very period of her separation from the State in 1843, into the work of evangelising the country, and from his first appearance had given a very cordial and general, though unofficial, welcome to this distinguished preacher, whom her exalted Head was so greatly owning in the spiritual harvest-field, but at this period she embraced

within her pale the greater number of the most widely known, most learned, and most acute divines in Scotland. Moreover at this time, although she had produced very vigorous and original thinkers, she was pre-eminently conservative alike in her theology and her Church polity, and might be pardoned for claiming to be the truest representative of the Scottish Church of the Reformation. Holding such a position, and having in her Church councils such master-theologians as Principal Cunningham, Dr. Duncan, Dr. Candlish, Principal Fairbairn, all now removed to the general assembly of the church of the firstborn above, but whose praise will long remain in all the churches, and such experienced Church jurists as Sir Henry Wellwood Moncrieff, and the late Mr. Murray-Dunlop, and holding such a conservative position in the eyes of Presbyterian Christendom, it was clear that whatever action she might take in this matter would bid fair to meet with the approbation of all the English-speaking Presbyterian Churches in the world.

The General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland met in Edinburgh in May, 1859, under the moderatorship of the revered Principal Cunningham, and an 'overture' was prepared to be submitted to it for the recognition of Mr. North as an Evangelist. By this ecclesiastial action Mr. North was taken out of the category of lay-preachers strictly so called. He jocularly said immediately after to a youthful member of my father's family who happened to smile at some remark he had made, "Why, sir, are you laughing at me? Do you not know that I am now a probationer of the Free Church of Scotland?" His studies at Oxford enabled the Church, without scruple, now formally to admit him to her pulpits. But while this was the case, the words "welcome him as an evangelist," in the resolution of the Assembly, recognized his right along with

others to engage in evangelistic labours previously to his having received this formal recognition.

Although my father was not himself a member of the Assembly of 1859, the burden of taking the necessary steps to procure an object which he, along with many others, felt to be eminently desirable, fell mainly upon him, and the result of his conferences with the brethren was that the following 'overture' was laid upon the table of the Supreme Court on the 25th of May, 1859:—

"Whereas Mr. Brownlow North, Graduate of Magdalene Hall, Oxford, has by his evangelistic labours during the last three years become well known to many ministers, professors of theology, elders, and members of this Church; has gained a high place in their esteem by his zeal for the glory of God, desire for the salvation of souls, and soundness in the faith that is in Christ Jesus; and appears to have received many seals to his work from the Lord of the harvest, in the awakening of sinners and the quickening of saints. And whereas it might increase his usefulness, be a fit testimony to the value attached to his self-denying labours, and advance the cause of Christ in the land, if Mr. North were to receive the formal sanction of this Church to his evangelistic work. And whereas further, it is known that such sanction would be acceptable to Mr. North, it is therefore humbly overtured to the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, by the undersigned members, that the General Assembly take these premises into consideration, appoint a Committee to converse with Mr. North; and if they shall report themselves satisfied of the soundness of his views on the great essential truths of salvation, that the Assembly do welcome him as an evangelist, who may be freely asked by the ministers of this Church to preach to their congregations, and on whose

labours they pray that the blessing of the Lord may abundantly rest.

(Signed) Rob. S. Candlish, Rob. Buchanan, James Julius Wood, Alex. Beith, James Grierson, William Wilson, W. Wood, Geo. Smeaton, James Gibson, James Mackenzie, James Lumsden, Donald Murray, John Bonar, W. K. Tweedie, James Begg, etc., etc., Ministers; Panmure, Jas. Miller, James Russell, Thos. M'Micking, Alex. E. Monteith, A. Murray Dunlop, W. H. Craufurd, Wm. Henderson, Robert Paul, Pat. Tennant, Andrew Cameron, Geo. F. Barbour, Archd. Gibson, Jas. Balfour, W. E. Anderson, W. S. Turnbull, G. Meldrum, James Cunningham, William Dickson, Laurence Craigie, Patrick B. Mure Macredie, F. Brown-Douglas, James Stevenson, Henry Paul, etc., etc., elders.

The overture was signed by sixty-eight ministers and by thirty-eight elders.

The Assembly Hall of the Free Church of Scotland, at the head of The Mound in Edinburgh, has been the scene of many intensely interesting deliberations and decisions, which have influenced the progress of the Church of Christ alike in Scotland and in distant lands. Those who have been present on any of the occasions when momentous issues were at stake, whether in regard to the defence or the propagation of the truth, will carry with them through life impressions that will never be effaced from the tablet of remembrance. And the day on which the General Assembly deliberated as to its course with regard to the recognition of this evangelist, whom the Head of the Church was so extensively blessing to the awakening of souls, will rank, in the recollection of all who witnessed it, among the memorable scenes that have taken place in a hall already consecrated by many sacred and inspiring memories. Many of those

who addressed the Assembly on this occasion, or who signed the memorial, are already gathered within the general assembly of the firstborn above, while their absence in the stirring and critical march of ecclesiastical events and religious opinions in our land makes us sigh for—

> "The touch of a vanish'd hand,
> And the sound of a voice that is still."

The adoption of this overture was fitly moved by the late Dr. Julius Wood, of Dumfries, a man much revered in the south of Scotland, and throughout the whole Church, as deeply imbued with compassion for perishing souls, as he was tender of his Master's honour, and whose venerable and fragile figure was long prominent on the platform of the Assembly in all deliberations regarding the progress of the Saviour's kingdom in our land.

He said, "There are two reasons which lead me to support the overture—the first arises out of regard to order in our ecclesiastical procedure, which I think will be secured by the recognition of Mr. North as an evangelist; and the other, that the talents which the Lord of the vineyard has bestowed on Mr. North ought to be acknowledged and his success recognized. I am sure it is not necessary for me to detain the House any longer. I believe we shall have a unanimous acceptance of the overture, or at least a very large concurrence."

The motion thus proposed was met by an amendment that the overture should be remitted to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, to consider and report to the ensuing 'Commission of Assembly' in August. This was duly seconded, both mover and seconder stating that they wished specially to guard against undue haste in the action of the Church.

Dr. Wood's motion was seconded by Mr. James Balfour, W. S., himself an earnest and effective lay-preacher, who said, "As an elder, I rise with peculiar gratification to

second the adoption of this overture, which has been signed by so unprecedented a number of the members of Assembly. I have listened, sir, with extreme attention to what has been said by the last speaker, because I am sensitively anxious that not one word should fall from any member of this Assembly that might even seem, by doubting the recent operations of the Holy Spirit in our land, to grieve Him; or to question the sovereignty of God in the use of the instruments which He may be pleased to employ in the work of saving souls. In seconding the motion, I wish that it should be distinctly understood that I do not undervalue a regular and ordained ministry, or a ministry thoroughly trained and educated. I fully appreciate such. I can conceive, indeed, of circumstances in which the Church ought to interfere to prevent the use of lay agents. If, for example, a minister, careless in the discharge of his duties, should lazily shirk his work, and be in the habit of asking any one, whatever his qualifications might be, to preach for him, they should then interfere. But it is quite another thing if a minister, whose whole mind is engrossed with the desire to win souls—the longing of whose heart, the occupation of whose time, and the burden of whose prayers are directed to that one object—if such a one should see a man, not an ordained minister, peculiarly qualified to arrest the careless and arouse the indifferent, whose labours were evidently being acknowledged by the Great Head of the Church, and should ask him to preach to his people, the Church should not interfere to prevent that. I can quite conceive the eagerness with which a minister would invite such a one to come and preach to his flock, and would say to him, 'Come, strike home; your sword has a keener edge than mine. The very duty which I have to discharge of unfolding the whole mind of God to my people from Sabbath to Sabbath, to some extent unfits me for speaking

to them so freshly as you can.' Such an invitation would not be opposed to his duty as a minister; it would be fulfilling it. I have heard Mr. North frequently in the pulpit, and have seen a good deal of him in private, and I am persuaded that none who have had that opportunity can have any doubt of the marvellous change that has been wrought on him, and of his absolute devotion to the one great work of winning souls. I have heard him say, that between the 1st and 15th of this month, one hundred young men, besides many other persons, have come to him, anxious about their souls. Which of you can say the same? I know that the labours of many of you are being blessed at present; but are there any that can say so much as that? It is the most fervent prayer of my heart that you all may be able to say it this very summer; and why not? Oh, if it should be so, and if you should have to deal practically, and not theoretically, with this subject, you will find many of your difficulties disappear Let me ask what would the reverend gentleman who spoke last do, for example, if a hundred young men in his congregation were to come fresh from hearing Mr. North, and tell him, with weeping eyes, that they now saw sin as they had never seen it before, and they wanted to know what they should do to be saved? What would he do? I cannot tell; but, though unacquainted with him, I feel persuaded that I know what he would *not* do. I am sure he would not turn away from them, saying that he could have no sympathy with them, because these impressions had been made in an irregular way, by a lay-preacher, and at irregular hours. I know, sir, that there are some who have feelings—I had almost called them prejudices—not only about the men, but also about hours and pulpits. I do not sympathise with these; yet as they are entertained by many of my best friends, I respect them. To me it

appears not to be of much consequence, if souls are saved, at what hour of the day this is done. We are told that the satisfaction of our Saviour is to see of the travail of His soul in the salvation of sinners. Oh! will it diminish that satisfaction one iota that these souls are converted in the morning rather than in the evening—at eleven o'clock rather than at seven? Surely not. Again, I think that the *place* in which the preacher stands is merely a matter of convenience. It appears to me to be immaterial, and entirely a question of feeling, not of principle. Sir, the work must be done. This is the grand matter. It must, for it is God's work; and who the instrument may be, and what the manner, are small questions. In Scripture it is not said that this is of little consequence merely, but of none. He that plants is not *anything*. He that waters is not *anything*. God alone is everything. In supporting this motion, I should like to guard against the supposition that the overture in any way implies that other instruments besides Mr. North ought not to be used in such work. God is at the present moment employing a great variety of these in Scotland: sometimes colporteurs, sometimes working men, sometimes ladies—some from England, some from Ireland—some Episcopalians, and some Presbyterians; and I should be glad to see more labourers in the vineyard, if imbued with the same spirit as animates Mr. North. There is room for them all, and work for them all. I cannot conclude without thanking you, sir, for the allusion to this subject which was contained in your inaugural address, and which, if you will forgive me for saying so, gave so fine a tone to the opening of this Assembly."

The Rev. Dr. Begg of Edinburgh, whose statuesque figure, commanding eloquence, and sagacious counsel are still spared to the Church, then spoke as follows:—

"The question, and the only question before us, is

whether the General Assembly—which must be admitted on all hands to have the power to recognise Mr. North if they see fit—should take the step proposed, and give to this powerful and faithful preacher a welcome in the evangelistic field. By admitting exceptions, where a manifest exception exists, instead of weakening, we strengthen the rule, and I for one cannot see how such a Church as ours can make any stand, even on our own arrangements, which are at the best, after all, only human arrangements, however important they may be in themselves, if we give a deliverance in opposition to such a proposal. I cannot see how we are to take our stand even on those arrangements, unless on the ground that we are prepared to make cases of exceptions when they occur. That is all that is proposed, and nothing more ; and if anything is to be done, it should be done cordially, and heartily, and gracefully, and not at all in a grudging way. I myself have heard Mr. North with much pleasure, and I very cordially support the overture."

The amendment was at this stage gracefully withdrawn by its mover, and a Committee, consisting of all the Theological Professors, along with Drs. Beith, Candlish, and Wood, was appointed to converse with Mr. North, and to report as to the soundness of his views on the great essential truths of salvation.

On Friday, the 27th May, the Report of this Committee was read by Dr. Beith, who, like the last-quoted speaker, is one of the few Disruption veterans still left to guide the Church by his ripe experience. The Report is as follows :—

"The Committee appointed by the General Assembly to confer with Mr. Brownlow North, report that they have, as instructed, met with him, and heard from him a clear and detailed account of his views on the great essential truths of salvation, as well as a narrative of the way in which he was led to engage at first in evangelistic work, and of the steps of his subsequent progress therein. The Committee have great pleasure in reporting to the General Assembly their entire satisfaction

with Mr. North's statements on both heads, and their persuasion that he has been in a remarkable way conducted into his present course by the hand of God, as well as that he has been much countenanced in his work. They therefore earnestly recommend to the General Assembly to welcome Mr. North as a friend of the Saviour, whom He has eminently qualified for addressing his fellow-sinners on the things which belong to their everlasting peace, and through whom, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, much spiritual benefit may be expected to come on the flocks whose ministers may invite him to preach to them the word of the great salvation."

Dr. Beith, after reading the Report, said—"I need not add a single word to this Report; I shall only say that our meeting with Mr. North was of the most gratifying kind. The conversation was full, touching on several points, and we were all especially deeply affected by the narrative which Mr. North gave of the way in which he was first of all led to engage in this work, in which he is still occupied, and the narrative which he gave of the fruits of his ministry—a ministry which has been abundantly blessed of God in every stage of his labours. And we cannot but hope that the Lord has employed him for the present time in doing an important work in the midst of us. On these grounds we unanimously, and most cordially, agreed to the Report which I have now the honour to lay before the Assembly."

He was followed by Professor Gibson, whose testimony was very valuable; for, himself a man of warm affection, he was wont to protest with warmth against any deviation from the received doctrine and order of the Church. He said—"As one of the Committee, I wish to be allowed to express my own impression as to the convictions conveyed to my mind by the conference with Mr. Brownlow North. I have never on any occasion heard a more distinct, simple, and lucid statement of the great doctrines of grace—first, in relation to the condition of man as a

sinner in the sight of God, dead in trespasses and sins, and as to the sovereignty of God in the election of grace; and secondly, as to the method of a sinner's justification, solely and entirely through the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ; and thirdly, in reference to the perpetual obligation lying even upon the sinner to obey the law of God, and the binding and unchangeable nature of that obligation upon the believer, and the duty of the believer, in gratitude and love to God, to show it forth in his life and conduct. Nor have I ever heard a more clear statement of the work of the Holy Spirit in relation to the condition of man as a sinner, utterly unable and indisposed to anything good till renewed by the Spirit of God. And, last of all, I wish simply to make this remark: I feel—for so far as I am informed the blessing of God has attended the efforts of Mr. North already in the work in which he has been engaged—that this is another proof that God is still continuing to do, what He by so many facts has in times past testified to, viz., that when those doctrines of grace are fully preached, they may be preached in consistency, in entire consistency, with the fullest freedom in proclaiming the gospel. We have here another testimony, not only to what we had in the olden times, but in the case of a Hervey, a Newton, a Scott, and a Simeon, that in holding the great doctrines which this Church holds, we are in no degree fettered in proclaiming the full and free offer of salvation to every sinner. Mr. North also declared that assurance was not of the essence of faith, though it was attainable, and ought to be earnestly sought after. I most humbly pray that, by the blessing of God, Mr. North may yet further be an honoured instrument in making those things largely manifest to the glory of God."

Dr. Candlish next rose, than whom the Free Church, of which he was one of the most distinguished ornaments,

possessed no keener intellect, and no heart that throbbed with nobler or more generous impulse. He said—"I beg to move the adoption of the Report; and in doing so, I may be allowed to state how very cordially I rejoice at the result to which the Assembly has, I think, evidently under the guidance of Divine providence and grace, been brought. I rejoice in this opportunity of making it plain that, as a Church, we are not limited and hampered with regard to recognising the work of the Lord, whatever may be the agency through whose instrumentality that work has been wrought. I attach as much importance as any man can possibly do to the ordinary rules and regulations instituted in the Christian Church, I attach as much importance as any man can do to a highly educated Christian ministry, I attach importance to the ordination of the ministry; but I think that if, as a Church, we have not the liberty occasionally, when God in His providence seems to be calling upon us, of deviating from the strict observance of the rules and regulations of which we ordinarily approve, we would be greatly straitened ourselves, and would hinder our participation in the good work of the Lord. I rejoice exceedingly, therefore, in having this opportunity of making it manifest to all the world how freely we recognise the Divine mission in the work of such a man as we are now to welcome, and as, I trust, many of our ministers will soon welcome to their pulpits. I beg to move the adoption of the Report, and to suggest that, if the motion is carried, the Moderator shall, in the name of the General Assembly, welcome Mr. North, who is now amongst us, give him the right hand of fellowship, and afford him an opportunity of expressing his mind in the Assembly."

Dr. Candlish was followed by Mr. Brown-Douglas, a well-known and much-esteemed elder of the Church, who said—"Moderator, it affords me the very highest pleasure

to second the motion, and to say how thoroughly I sympathise, as one of the elders of the Church, with every sentiment expressed by Dr. Candlish, and expressed by my respected friend Mr. Balfour, when this subject was last before the House. The Report of the Committee deals with the important question of doctrine, and it does not become me to speak further on that subject; but I cannot refrain from giving my testimony, from my intimacy with Mr. North, to his entire devotion to the one great object of seeking the conversion of souls, both in public and in private. I have not met any one of whom I can say more truthfully that he seems to be instant in season and out of season in this good work. I have had an opportunity of hearing him preach in the largest hall in Edinburgh, to 4,000 people or more, and many of these not generally attending on the means of grace, and it is within my own knowledge that there have been, not one or two, but several, who have attributed their conversion to hearing him preach in that place. Some personal friends of my own, whom I thought little likely to exhibit much spiritual concern, have been by his preaching awakened within the last few weeks to take a deep interest in the great things of salvation. I have seen many Christian people also who have derived great benefit from his preaching; and I rejoice at the course now about to be adopted by the Assembly."

Another beloved elder, who has long since entered into his rest, Mr. Turnbull, of Huntingtower, next bore witness to the fruits of Mr. North's labours in the neighbourhood of Perth, and to the salutary influence he was exerting over young men at the most critical period of their lives.

Professor Miller then addressed the House, a man who was the very model of a Christian physician, one of the most effective and popular of platform speakers, whose

manly presence, and frank, ringing tones were never wanting when called on to plead in the interest of religion or sobriety. He said—"I happen to be one of those who have been permitted to enjoy the privilege of a free and somewhat extended personal knowledge of Mr. Brownlow North ; and from that personal knowledge I take leave to say, that no man can concur more heartily than I do in the conclusion to which I trust the Assembly will now unanimously come. We will thereby secure the services of this eminent servant of God, for spreading Divine truth throughout the land still more freely than he has ever yet been privileged to do, and for bringing that truth, with all his characteristic power, not only in contact with the hearts of those who have been already awakened, winning them back to their first love, and leading them to a more chastened and intimate walk with God, but especially for bringing that truth in contact with those who were previously ignorant and hardened in their minds. Already, as the result of Mr. North's labours, many souls have been awakened and brought, I believe, to the fold of Christ. Most certainly there is no cause to fear any homœopathic treatment in this case—we need not suspect the administration of any infinitesimal doses of God's truth being practised by this gentleman. If ever there was a free and full outgiving—a full, flowing, flooding tide of the blessed truths of the gospel brought in contact with hearers' minds, it is, and will be, under the preaching of this servant of God."

The motion was then unanimously agreed to, and Mr. Brownlow North came forward to the table of the House amidst loud and general applause.

The Moderator, Principal Cunningham, then addressed Mr. North in the name of the Assembly, and it was most fitting that this important duty should devolve on one whose vast erudition, mastery of theological controversies, and clear

judgment gave peculiar significance and weight to all his utterances. He said—"Mr. North, I have great pleasure and heartfelt satisfaction in announcing to you that I have been called, by the unanimous decision of this House, to recognsie and welcome you as a servant of Jesus Christ who has received unusual gifts for preaching the glad tidings of great joy, and whose work in this department the Lord has greatly honoured. The General Assembly has come to this decision, I believe, on full knowledge, and on deliberate consideration. I concur heartily in the grounds on which this judgment has been adopted. It is proper, in the way of explanation, for me to say that I long ago adopted the resolution of declining to take any active part in promoting cases of deviation from our ordinary rules in regard to the licensing of probationers. I thought that a prudent step in my circumstances, and I resolved to act upon it as a general prudential resolution. But although I thought it prudent, in my circumstances, to adopt such a resolution, it did not arise in the least from any jealousy as to the perfect warrantableness and expediency of occasional deviations from our ordinary arrangements. I have had a strong and growing conviction that the Church ought to make provision for occasionally deviating from her ordinary arrangements. I never could see the warrantableness of any Church of Christ, however deeply impressed with its importance in ordinary circumstances, venturing to lay down as a resolution that she would not see, and would not recognise, gifts for preaching or for the ministry, except in men who had gone through the whole of the ordinary curriculum. No Church has a right to lay down that rule. This Church has not laid down that rule, and I trust never will. The Church must lay herself open to consider exceptional cases, to mark God's hand, and to make a fair use and application of what He has been doing.

Everybody admits this in theory, but I have sometimes thought there was great unwillingness to apply it; and I must say I have been of late desirous to see two or three good cases of exception of that kind, not only because I would like to see the Church practically recognising the principle to which I have referred, but for this additional reason, that I have a strong impression that in the actual position of the Church we will find considerable difficulty in keeping up a high standard in regard to the mass of our students, unless we leave an open way for occasional exceptions. I believe, if we leave such an opening, it will be of more importance in enabling us to maintain a high standard and full compliance with our strict regulations in regard to nineteen-twentieths of our students, than by attempting to carry out the same rule to the whole twenty-twentieths, and thereby running the risk of lowering the standard of the whole body, and losing, besides, the benefit of the exceptions. I have great pleasure in saying that, although I have not heard Mr. North preach, yet I am thoroughly satisfied, on the testimony of most competent judges, that the Lord has given him great gifts for this work. And I cannot but regard the very strong feelings called forth by Mr. North's preaching in the hearts of many of our best men—of the men most desirous to promote the work of the holy ministry among us—I cannot but regard, further, that very cordial and almost unanimous resolution of this General Assembly, come to under peculiar circumstances, and, I dare say, in many cases against strong previous impressions—I cannot but regard these circumstances as making out a clear and strong case, making out a full warrant for my own mind to be very cordial in carrying out the duty imposed upon me by the General Assembly. I have very great pleasure, Mr. North, in tendering to you the right hand of fellowship, and in recog-

nising and welcoming you as a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, and as highly honoured by your Master in your work. And perhaps you will allow me to say that your position is a somewhat peculiar one,—that while you have eminent gifts, there are, of course, difficulties and temptations to which, in your position, you are exposed. I have no doubt you will feel that you stand deeply in need of wisdom and guidance and discretion; and I have no doubt you will feel that, amid all the encouragement you have had, you have still much cause to wait upon God, and walk humbly with Him. I have great pleasure in tendering to you the right hand of fellowship, and in welcoming you to this General Assembly."

The Moderator, in concluding his speech, gave Mr. North the right hand of fellowship, amid loud and general applause. This was also done by Sir Henry Moncreiff, Drs. Beith, Grierson, Wood, and others.

Mr. North, who appeared deeply affected, and spoke with difficulty at the outset of his remarks, then addressed the House as follows:—"The Lord says, 'How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?' Now, I think that at this moment I have received an honour such as it is impossible to exceed. I trust and hope that it is of God that so many of God's people should see it their duty to go out of their way and do this very strange thing. For me to have been sitting in this House, and listening to the language I have been hearing, and to have been welcomed as I have been welcomed—nothing can exceed the weight of all these things—language cannot express that which I feel put upon me at this moment. And I do earnestly request the prayers of this Assembly, that what the Moderator so kindly and affectionately put me in mind that I require, may be granted to me. One of my own prayers has been, from

almost the first day that I prayed at all, that I might receive marvellous grace, and marvellous grace to bear the marvellous grace. I do not know if you understand what I mean. But I feel that if a man receives marvellous grace, he needs marvellous grace to enable him to bear it. I remember walking with Mr. Davidson of Dallas, upwards of three years ago, and telling him that this was my prayer. He was the first minister that ever asked me to speak in his church, and is now present, a member of this Assembly. Had God ceased, when I was preaching to 200 people in a barn at Elgin (and that was nearly four years ago), to raise me higher, He had then gone far beyond anything that in my wildest dream I ever imagined or expected. To find myself where I am at this moment, I can only say I trust and believe it is the Lord's doing, but it is marvellous in our eyes. But, dear friends, I have now an opportunity that I shall never forgive myself all my life if I neglect. And although I have a great opening to speak about myself, and to express much more than I have expressed, yet I would rather seize the chance, which I may never have again, of such an assembly as that I am now speaking to, of trying if God will give me the power to say that which will do good. The time is short, and we know not what may be lost by a neglected opportunity. Dr. Candlish told me yesterday, that I would probably be asked to say a few words to-day, and that it would be on the subject of the state of religion in Scotland. I have had an opportunity, during the last three years, of seeing much of the religious state of the country; and I have come to this conclusion, that although we are, by God's grace, gathering many prisoners out of the chains of sin and Satan, still it is but one of a city and two of a family, and that the whole world is no better now than in the days of the apostle, when he said it was *lying in wicked-*

ness. Now, dear friends, by the help of God's Spirit, how much might not you, who are now before me, effect in leavening this putrid mass of iniquity?

I believe there are *four special things* for which God is very angry with the land, and for which His Spirit is so little among us. *First*, for the neglect of united prayer—*the appointed means of bringing down the Holy Spirit.* I say it, because I believe it, that the Scotch, with all their morality so-called, and all their outward decency, respectability, and love of preaching, are not a praying people. Take the Presbyterian Churches,—I am not speaking of the Free Church, the Established Church, or any other Church,—take the Churches of the land, and you find congregations of from 1400, to 1600 on Sabbaths, and at the prayer-meetings on Tuesdays you find thirty, forty, fifty, and sixty people. Sirs is not this the truth? The neglect of prayer proves, to my mind, that there is a large amount of *practical* infidelity. If people believed that there was a real, existing, personal God, they would ask Him for what they wanted, and they would get what they asked. But they do not ask, because they do not believe or expect to receive. Why do I say this? Because I want to get Christians to remember, that though preaching is one of the great means appointed by God for the conversion of sinners, yet, unless God give the increase, Paul may plant and Apollos may water in vain; and God says He will be inquired of. O ministers! excuse me,—you gave me this chance of speaking,—urge upon your people to come to the prayer-meeting. O Christians! go more to prayer-meetings than you do. And when you go to the prayer-meeting, try and realize more that there is *use in prayer.*

Secondly, I do not believe that there is a more effective system in Christendom for the promotion of true religion than the Presbyterian system, *if it was carried out.* But the

machinery is not worked. Look at the mass of elders there are in the Presbyterian Church. But what are these elders doing as a body? Blessed be God, there are many holy, self-denying, godly men, who seek not their own things, but the things which are Jesus Christ's, and who go into the lanes and alleys of the cities, and pray, and speak, and try to lead people to God. But do the elders, *as a body*, do that? How many elders are there in Edinburgh? Say there are a thousand. If these thousand elders would go forth and try to promote the glory of Jesus Christ and the good of souls, what salt, light, and leaven might they be to the whole community! But I believe there are elders,—it is possible there may be such in this very Assembly,—who know that God, who searcheth their hearts, sees that from week to week, and from month to month, they never make a single attempt to do anything for the glory of Jesus Christ, and such must give an account to God at the last day.

The *third* point I have seldom or never heard touched upon, because, perhaps, men hardly know how to alter it, but I believe it lies at the very heart's core of the irreligion of the land; and it is this, in the Church of England, and in all the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland, and I doubt not, in all other bodies, men are brought up from childhood to say that they are going into the Church—men are put to college and educated for the Church—and men in England are brought before their bishops, and in Scotland before their Presbyteries, and without any fear of being struck dead for committing the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, they swear in my Church, and state in yours, that they believe they are called by the Holy Ghost to the ministry, and that they enter it out of a desire to promote the salvation of the souls of their fellow-creatures; *and they know when they say it they tell a lie.* I say there are multitudes of instances of this—even in this Assembly there may be

those who know that they have been guilty of this fearful sin—for even among the twelve disciples there was a Judas—even in this Assembly there may be those who have even now no reason to believe that they have been born again of the Spirit, and who are nothing but hireling shepherds. Oh, if there be, I implore you to conceive your position! If it was a dreadful thing for the rich man to think of the entrance of his five brethren into hell, knowing how their reproaches would increase his torments, what will the entrance of your congregations into hell be to you? How will you bear their reproaches? Think of it! The day of judgment will come, and if you know in your hearts that you are not yet converted, and are not really labouring for souls, as those called of God do labour, oh, follow the advice that Peter gave to Simon Magus—confess your sins to God, pray for pardon and the Holy Spirit, and for the baptism of that fire which can yet enable you to awake the dead around you; and then, instead of being lost for ever, you may yet appear before God in glory with many children which may still be given you. Now, could there not be some test in the Churches—some practical proof of the new birth—something requiring an evidence of fruit—before men are sent into the ministry merely because they have passed certain examinations, and have an outward decent, respectable, moral character? Even supposing that, numerically, ministers were to fail by so doing, and there were not sufficient ministers to supply the Churches, would not such a want be likely to make the people reflect, and send them in prayer to God for a godly minister? Brethren, bear with me. I do not presume upon my position: but if I lose this opportunity of speaking, no man can tell if I will ever have the like again. I asked God this morning to bless me, and to give me a word that should be blessed to you.

Lastly, the very best amongst us are exceedingly guilty in

neglecting the apostolic injunction to be instant '*out of season*.' How solemn is the introduction to the command, '*I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing*.' 'I charge thee'—what? '*Be instant in season, out of season*.' Now, we can all speak when we are expected in the pulpit, in the prayer-meeting, or at the family altar, but are we faithful *out of season?* I feel convinced that if the godly minister would prayerfully commence a system of individual, faithful, personal dealing with his people in their own houses, speaking as one who was in earnest, and beseeching men not to rest in a mere form of godliness, but to be content with nothing short of God's Spirit witnessing with their spirit that they were born again, that he would very soon see of the fruit of his labour, and have reason to bless God and take courage. We need more *out of season work*, more talking to people apart in private as to the state of their souls."

Mr. North concluded, amidst applause, by thanking the Assembly for the honour done him, and expressing his hope that he might never give them any reason to regret it.

Major-General Anderson hoped the earnest appeals of Mr. North would be pondered by every one present. The Assembly then engaged in prayer, Dr. Beith leading their devotions.

BROWNLOW NORTH'S POST BAG.—LETTERS FROM ANXIOUS INQUIRERS AND YOUNG CONVERTS.

"I think how many thousands
Of care-encumbered men,
Each bearing his burden of sorrow,
Have crossed the bridge since then."

LONGFELLOW.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—MATT. xi. 28.

VII.

THIS chapter may probably prove to some readers one of the most profitable, and we hope it will also prove not the least interesting in the volume. The variety of spiritual experience that is here recorded in the writers' own words is as great as the diversity of the position in life, occupation, and circumstances of the correspondents, and may perhaps strike a chord of sympathy in the bosom of some reader, who may in one or other of these heart effusions find a picture that is not very far from being a portrait of himself.

We think they may prove helpful to persons under spiritual anxiety or at the outset of their Christian course, by showing them that their state of mind in its general features, whatever its special details may be, is not peculiar to themselves, but that others have suffered as they do, and have been succoured. It is right to call the reader's attention to the fact that, in the greater part of the letters here selected for transcription, the letter was written after the lapse of several years since the professed experience of a saving change. This affords a pretty good guarantee, not only of the writer's sincerity, but of the reality of the change that had taken place. In some of the

cases here given, as well as in many others, we could ourselves vouch for the fact that the conversion, however sudden, has been attested by a long course of consistent Christian life, and, in several instances, of successful public work in the Lord's vineyard. We have thought it prudent to withhold all clue to the writers' identity in every case except where permission has been granted us to publish names, or where we know that the race is now finished, and that the life and death bore testimony to true and tried discipleship; for of some of them we have every reason to believe that the subject of this memorial sketch has been able to say in the presence of their common Lord, "Behold me and the children whom Thou hast given me!"

The letters which came to Mr. North in such numbers, and which are very interesting to read, even after the lapse of nearly twenty years in some cases, are from persons in all ranks and positions of life. Here are letters from peers and peeresses, Indian rajahs and German princesses, professional men, busy merchants, acute lawyers, soldiers and sailors, squatters in the lonely Australian bush, from young ladies, from boys, from governesses, students, footmen, letter-carriers, domestic servants, farm servants, etc., etc., all bearing on the one great question; a few being from Christians encouraging him in his work, but the great mass being from those who had been awakened, or converted, or delivered from spiritual distress through his preaching. Some are from persons who

had never known what sin is according to the world's estimation, but had been deeply convinced of it by the Divine Spirit, a few from those who had been guilty of the blackest sins, all preserved with equal care, and docqueted methodically by this indefatigable evangelist. Of hundreds of such letters we can only give here a very short selection.

The first letter is from a sailor; and if we could have peeped in on the writer, we would have found him penning his epistle to his spiritual father in one of Her Majesty's ships of war lying in the beautiful estuary of the Firth of Forth, above the point where the northern and southern shores curve inwards as if to embrace each other, but suddenly retire, leaving between them that fair stretch of deep, calm, and almost landlocked water known by the historical name of St. Margaret's Hope. The writer is not a lad, but a married man and the father of a family, and had returned half a dozen years before from foreign service.

A SAILOR'S LETTER.

"H.M.S. —— *April 5th*, 1860.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I take the pleasure of writing to thank you for the great blessing you have been the means of bringing on a most hardened and wicked sinner. You may remember coming to preach one Sunday on board of this ship. Your prayer was heard that day. The Lord sent your words home to the heart of one of the greatest sinners who was listening to you, and who thought he had been so vilely used that there was no truth in religion or in the Bible,

one who reviled God's truth, and argued against it, and many times said man had no pre-eminence above a beast, and brought the Bible to prove it, and in fact had almost become an infidel. But you stopped me: I heard you say you had been guilty of almost every crime, you thought, but murder; so thinks I, 'That's a plain-speaking man, I'll just pay attention to him,' not thinking to do much good by it; but when you asked if we ever thought upon God, it went like a shot through me. I had forgotten Him altogether.

"Family distress in fifty-four, when I came home in the frigate ——, had driven God out of my thoughts, and the devil took the advantage, and goaded me on to drink, and ran me into all sorts of evil. Your coming on board that day just saved my soul from his snare; but I have had to struggle hard, as you told us. I prayed to the Lord Jesus to assist me, and He has done so, and has beaten him, and I am happy to inform you the good Spirit is master within, and shall never more be drowned by an evil one. And now, instead of reviling God's truth, I adore it, and read it earnestly, and pray while reading for the Lord to open my eyes to see the hid treasures therein contained, and I think He grants my prayer; and instead of not being able to think of Him a minute without some worldly thought coming in, I think of Him long and often. I found all you said true. I was eating husks all my life till now. I never was so happy before. I often think of you, sir, and pray the Lord to prosper all your efforts, and may His blessing ever attend you for the blessing you have brought on me. My heart is full.

"From yours ever thankful,

"A—— B——, H.M.S. ——.

"P.S. There is a prayer-meeting on board this ship every night. It was held in a cabin, but they are obliged to go

into the stoke-room, the cabin was not large enough. Mr. Palmer (the Lieutenant) attends with the men."

The same address which was blessed to this sailor had been carried home to the heart of one of the officers in the ship, who soon afterwards became, as he has ever since continued, an active worker for that Lord whom he then chose as his portion. About a dozen years after that memorable day he thus writes to his spiritual father:—

A Naval Officer's Letter.

"*January 15th*, 1871.

"Dear Mr. North,—Do you remember, now nearly twelve years ago, your preaching on board H.M.S. —— from the Prodigal Son? It was that little sentence, 'when he was yet a great way off,' that the Holy Spirit blessed to my soul. How wonderful it all was, and still is! One hour amongst the tombs, mad; the next, sitting at the feet of Jesus, in one's right mind. What a comforting text that is, 'kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.' What should we be without the Lord's protecting care? How soon would Satan be in possession of us again! I am so sorry to be off early to-morrow to London, but I trust we may meet again; at any rate, we shall meet before very long with our robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. The conflict will be over then for good and all. God grant that an abundant blessing may have accompanied your words to-night.

"Believe me, ever yours in Christ,

"George Palmer."

We shall now give an extract from a letter he

wrote to Mr. North six months after his conversion, which shows how active he was from the first in seeking to stand up for Jesus and win souls to Him.

"*Nov. 7th*, 1860.

"I am happy and thankful to be able to tell you of fresh instances of God's mercy to sailors, as during the last month the chaplain and myself have had a school in the evening, composed entirely of our own men, quite independent of the fishermen, who also meet every night for prayer. Fifty-two men have been attending for the purpose of learning to read and write, and the last half-hour we devote to the service of God. I had between seventy and eighty fishermen in the engine-room last night, and last Sunday I could not go up to the 'E'; but to make up for my disappointment God enabled me to speak His word to fifteen of our own men between two guns on the main deck: and truly I was never more proud and delighted in my whole life; it was such a direct answer to prayer, as I had so longed to get our own blue jackets together by themselves. It is a glorious privilege to be permitted to be an instrument in His hands for good, and to endeavour in our poor way to show our gratitude for all He has done for us. Our chaplain is away on leave, so I am quite by myself now at the school and meeting.

"Yours very sincerely,

"GEO. PALMER."

Such officers are an honour to their queen on earth, as well as to the King of kings above, of whose service they are not ashamed. May our country long be blessed, as she has been of late, with many devoted servants of Christ in both army and navy, and may

their noble example, amid so many difficulties and much opposition, stir up all God's children in other professions, many of whom are absolutely doing nothing to advance His kingdom by personal effort, not to stand all the day idle, seeing the Lord "hath need of them," and souls are perishing near them, who might be saved by the active and prayerful exercise of such gifts, influences, and opportunities as God in His providence has given them.

If we could have looked in on the writer of the next letter, we should have found him among boxes of title deeds, and piles of evidence, writs, and summonses, in the fiscal's office of a Scotch county town. He writes urging Mr. North to return to preach the Gospel in that place, and signs himself "a would-be convert."

A CLERK'S LETTER.

"*October*, 1859.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am a sinner, a terrible sinner, but God in His divine mercy, I know, if I sincerely repent, will forgive all past sins, and welcome me to His fold again. I have faith in my God, but I am not at peace; there is a something, a something hanging about me yet, and Satan is there also tugging at my heart-strings, and advising me to horrible things.

"I say I am not at peace. I have counted the cost. I wish to be with Jesus in heaven; I wish to be one of God's congregation, I have prayed Him to make me one; I have prayed Him to send His aid, to come down and assist me to trample on Satan, for without His divine assistance I am lost. I know I am unworthy of a place in His memory, but I would fain go to Him. I have not faith in Him alto-

gether, though I long for it, but I believe that if I hunger and thirst after righteousness, He will satisfy me. Oh, when I think how often Jesus has been crucified by me, though He suffered crucifixion for me, the fearful thought comes over me, 'Can such a sinner as I be saved?' but I remember His assurance that He will forgive the chiefest of sinners if he be willing, and I have faith in Him, and believe; but still I am not at peace.

"A WOULD-BE CONVERT."

It was in reading, studying, and replying to such letters as these, which came to him morning by morning in great numbers, that Mr. North spent the forenoon at least of each day, after the large portion he reserved for private devotion and diligent perusal and study of the word of life; which occupations together always confined him to his own room till one o'clock. It was through the post office, as well as through the inquiry-room, that the book of the human heart was laid open to him, which with the book of revelation, formed the volumes he studied, and studied all the day. These two books, the Bible and the human heart, were his theological library, and perhaps some of us in the ministry would find greater help and success in our work, if we studied these two volumes far more intently than we do. To answer such a letter as the above, and multitudes of others similar in strain, yet each with some distinctive feature in the case, he had to look much up to God for wisdom, and much into His word for direction, that he might

minister the suitable instruction, warning, counsel, and encouragement to every soul. The work is one of the most exhausting that a man can engage in, and it is matter of thankfulness that, with a frame somewhat weakened, he was enabled for so many years to bear the great fatigues providentially laid upon him in private teaching and dealing with cases of spiritual distress, as well as in public preaching.

Let none suppose that all the correspondence came from persons able to analyse and express their feelings, and trace their spiritual history. There is many a short, ill-spelt, ill-written note, expressing in a few lines the anxiety of the writer's soul, yet as carefully preserved and docqueted by this skilful evangelist. Here is one such, apparently from a female farm servant.

A SERVANT'S LETTER.

"*Jan. 3rd*, 1859.

"MR. NORTH,—My heart has failed me a thousand times before I could come to you. Perhaps I am only deceiving myself, but I have had many an anxious thought about my soul, and have longed to converse with one who really feels a God as you do. I know Christ died: I know He lives: but I cannot see the cross and His sufferings there for me. I do not know what it is to be washed in Christ's blood and feel forgiven. Oh pray for me, and do what you can to bring a sinner to peace in believing. Forgive my presumption.

"Yours humbly, E. F."

The writer of the next letter was a student in the grey granite capital of Northern Scotland, a city

that has always been celebrated for the acuteness and intellectual power of its divines, though not always for their evangelical fervour, and which has been from time to time the scene of remarkable outpourings of the Holy Spirit. This correspondent became a devoted minister of Jesus Christ in the Free Church of Scotland, and is now in connexion with the English Presbyterian Church.

A Student's Letter.

"Aberdeen, *March 2nd*, 1863.

"My dear Sir,—I regret much that I have been deprived of a personal interview with you, though I have been privileged to hear you every time you have preached in Aberdeen. I therefore take the liberty of sending you this note to tell you that I have never repented the choice I made some seven years ago, when, in Albion Street Chapel, you pointed me to a personal Saviour. Very often, to my shame and confusion, have I proved unfaithful and treacherous; but so great has been His love to me, that He has not cast me off, but has again and again gone after His lost sheep in the wilderness, folding me in His bosom, and speaking words of cheer and comfort. I have been frequently in the depths, often in the hot furnace, and of late in the wilderness; but wherever I am, there He is; and in the very wilderness He has given me songs, vineyards, choice dainties. Oh His love, His forbearance, His tender mercies! Would I could praise Him more, and were moulded into His glorious image! In a few months I expect, D.V., to be licensed, but I shrink back from the work when I think of its awful nature and responsibility. Oh! try sometimes and remind Jesus of me, that I may be an able minister of the New Testament, one dead to self and to the opinion of the world. The Lord has had much

to do with me, a proud, stubborn, wayward child; but He sees my heart, and knows that it is my earnest desire and prayer that I may sit at His feet and learn of Him!

"Yours very truly,

"J. H. C."

The next letter is from a German lady sojourning in London, and has no signature or address by which the writer could be traced; but it shows us how uniform, under a vast variety of outward conditions, are the ways of Divine grace, and proves that the Lord will gather in His own chosen ones by some instrumentality or other, in ways that are as beautifully wise as mysterious.

A GERMAN LADY'S LETTER.

"LONDON, *April 7th*, 1860.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Suffer me to express to you from my deepest soul my thanks for all which, next to God, I owe you. I am a poor German sinner, who left her country three years ago; I do not know why, my heart yearned for England; and oh how wondrous are the ways of the Lord! it was here that I should recognise the truth, and gradually be penetrated of it. I never shall forget the 18th of March when, under your pulpit, I listened to your precious message; my stony heart was melted, and all hesitation vanished, and, like Rebecca, my decision was taken. How happy and rejoicing I went home that night, thanking the Lord for what He had done for me, and praying Him not to leave me for a minute! Joyfully I looked forward to Good Friday, when I should hear you again, and most fervently I thank you for expounding, as through the inspiration of the Spirit, this psalm so mightily and beautifully. Earnestly I read and prayed the words of David in the evening. But

how busy the devil is just when we feel the most sincere! He would not let me pray, 'Lead me and guide me,' but showed me how hard and unpleasant the ways of the Lord often would be. Your warning, 'The Lord expects you not only to be a joyful Christian, but a *hell-shaking* Christian, came not out of my mind, and I trembled at the responsibility of my new office. Oh, how can I be faithful to the end, which perhaps may be very far? But the Lord heard my cries, and comforted me; for it is written, 'As thy day, so shall thy strength be;' and Jesus said, 'I will be with you always.' Oh that I could remember all that you say, dear Mr. North! because I need it all for the dear people of my country; nay, that you rather would go yourself, and tell them the gospel, as they have never heard it before. Surely the Lord has not sent me here without purpose: oh that I might be enabled to do His work, always trusting in Him as my strength! I am only an infant in Christ, and feel weak as such, but will you pray for me that I grow in grace and in the power of His might?

"From one of your devoted sisters in Christ Jesus."

Strange to say, the sermon which awoke such a strain of thanksgiving in the bosom of this poor stranger lady, and brought her note of sweet gratitude, awoke bitter opposition in at least one bosom, and brought an angry and rude letter, also anonymous, from one holding that redemption was universal, and casting back into the preacher's face the gospel, as proclaimed by him that day, as being no "good news" for any sinner. Mr. North could afford patiently to bear such taunts when the Lord so graciously accompanied his word with signs following. "Perhaps," this writer says, "(indeed, I should say

certainly,) if you had been 'sent,' you would have had a pleasanter message than the one you gave us out of your own head on Friday night." But it had proved very pleasant to at least one wounded heart.

The next letter is from a young lady in Edinburgh, who, although not awakened, or brought to seek and find the Saviour by Mr. North (as was her only sister), was led by him to entire separation from the world, and consecration to Christ, and into clear views of the gospel, which filled her with light and peace. It is very often so in the Lord's great harvest field, that one soweth and another reapeth, and that both have reason to rejoice together. To be the sole instrument of awakening, enlightening, leading to the Saviour, and establishing on Him of many souls, would appear to be too great an honour to be safely conferred by the Lord of the harvest and of the reapers upon any single worker. Accordingly we find that His usual way is to divide the toil, and to divide the success and the honour among His servants. The writer of this letter was well known to the author, and after many years of a consistent and useful life she fell asleep in Jesus in February, 1872.

A YOUNG LADY'S LETTER.

"EDINBURGH, *September 28th*, 1859.

"DEAR MR. NORTH,—As you know so little of my past history, perhaps you will allow me to say a few words about it, to show how wonderful God's dealings towards me have been; for I may truly say, I was brought by 'a way I knew not.' I believe the Holy Spirit has striven with me since

my childhood, though I often, often resisted Him. Thoughts of what would become of me in eternity would often cross my mind with startling power, and my only comfort lay in dismissing the subject altogether. I had quite a passion for novel-reading, which of course was poison to my soul, and which I believe deadened the powers of my mind to a great extent, by inducing a sort of dreamy lethargy, if I may so call it, and inaction of mind, the evil effects of which I feel to this day. Self was my idol, and much greater homage would I have paid it, had not restraining grace prevented. Until I became Christ's, my life was one long course of disappointments (how different *now!*) Gradually I was convinced of the sin of novel-reading and waltzing, and felt compelled, by a power I could not resist, to give up these snares of Satan. Still I was without Jesus. It proves how dark and blind the natural heart is. The preaching of Mr. Caird (now Principal Caird) used to affect me powerfully. It was in January, 1853, after a very awakening sermon by him in Greenside Church, that on Monday morning I was led to ask myself what I was to do. A voice within urged me to read James's 'Anxious Inquirer.'* Satan tried hard to prevent my doing so, but the Holy Spirit prevailed. I found in this little book a simple explanation of the way of salvation. I saw that faith was necessary to justify the sinner; and knowing that I had no faith, I prayed to God to give me faith in Jesus, and received an answer within that week. I can remember the moment when light came into my soul, and I knew I was accepted in the Beloved. My heart now turned from the world, and longed for Christian friends; but I knew none to whom I could open my mind. I was very ignorant then. I knew little or nothing of the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart,

* This was a book which Mr. North constantly recommended inquirers to read.

or the necessity to watch and pray against the temptations of Satan, whose personality I did not realize. I gradually lost the tenderness of conscience I had at first, and though I did not go to large parties, I gradually became worldly-minded again. This state of things went on till God in His longsuffering love sent me to hear you preach. It was more from curiosity than any other feeling that I went. I was told by one lady that she would on no account go to hear you again, as she shook all over, and would have given anything to get out of church, only she found that impossible, owing to the crowd. I asked my sister to accompany me, but she declined, so I went to hear you alone one forenoon. You preached from Titus ii. 11—14. You said a good deal about lukewarm Christians, and their ungrateful return for all the love of Jesus, and all He suffered on earth for them. I felt that sermon come home to my soul with a power I had never experienced before. I felt I was a lukewarm Christian, and resolved and wished that I could give myself entirely to Jesus; but still there was a mist within. I got my sister and father after that to go to hear you at the Greyfriars. Your preaching was to me different from anything I had ever heard before. You made religion a thing of happiness and beauty, and I felt irresistibly drawn again and again to hear you. Your last sermon in Edinburgh at that time, in Free St. Luke's, was blessed as the means of my dear sister's awakening. How we ever went to see you is a wonder to us now, but our heavenly Father did it all. I know I have been a new creature since that interview. Light dawned into my soul when you were talking of the promises being ours independently of feelings, and I saw a beauty in Jesus I had never seen before. My heart was so full of gratitude for Jane's conversion, that I gave myself all away to Jesus for the rest of my life; and though I know now, better than ever I did

before, how wicked and deceitful my heart is, yet it is my earnest desire to live to His glory, and to do His will in all things.

"Our ambition now is to gain *jewelled* crowns. Do pray for us, that we may win many souls to Jesus, and never be ashamed to confess Him before men.

"Praying that God may bless you and your labours most abundantly, believe me,

"Yours most gratefully in Jesus, C. O."

Six months later, another long and interesting letter from the same correspondent came to Mr. North, giving an account of the progress of the work of grace in herself and her sister. As it may help others beginning the Christian race, we shall give one or two extracts.

"EDINBURGH, *May 3rd*, 1860.

"My sister and I can never forget what we owe to you under God. It is just two years since your preaching was so wonderfully blessed to us both; and, blessed be His holy name, God has, I trust, enabled us to hold fast the profession of our faith. His yoke is indeed easy, His service is perfect freedom and happiness and peace. I know I am weak, I know I could not keep myself for one moment, but I know He is faithful who has promised, 'My grace is sufficient for thee.' When I look at self, what a wretched thing I appear! but what a glorious thought that is of the poor sinner being *hid* in Christ! that word *hid* seems to me to imply so much. Sometimes, when I have been trying to talk to others of the finished work of Christ being their only ground of acceptance, I have had such clear views brought before me of Jesus standing in the sinner's room, that I have been filled with wonder and praise. I am sure

you will rejoice to hear that God is blessing our poor attempts to speak for Him in the districts, and in our Sabbath classes. To Him be all the glory! God is showing me more and more that nothing I can say will do any good except He give the blessing. He is also giving me more patience to wait His time. When I first began, I wanted to reap all at once, now He has shown me that 'one soweth and another reapeth,' so I am willing to be used in any way He pleases. How much of self there is, even when I am trying to serve Him! Oh for more humility, to be abased in the dust! My sister and I and two other friends hold a little prayer-meeting once a week, to plead for our unconverted friends. We paid two visits to Newhaven, with dear Miss W——. It was delightful to see the eagerness and pleasure with which the converts talked of being brought out of darkness into light. One young fish-woman told us that when anxious and told to 'believe,' she said to those about her, 'I believe everything,' but she could get no peace till, as she said, 'I saw I must *trust* in what I believe.' I mention this, as at that time we thought it a very simple definition of faith. I have not forgotten what you said about striving against that fear which is so apt to come over one when trying to pray before others; and though it was sometimes very hard, yet the Lord has enabled me to overcome it in great measure. I believe there is as much pride as timidity in regard to this. I know with myself it is so, the fear of not being able to make a good prayer; so when I found this out, I saw it was sinful to yield to this wicked pride.

"Ever yours most gratefully, C. O."

Two letters from Mr. North to this lady, in reply, will be found at the commencement of chapter viii.

In the latter part of the year 1862, Mr. North paid

a visit to Haddo House, the seat of the Earl of Aberdeen, and a sermon which he then preached, along with private personal conversation, was made a means of blessing to two of the sons of that highly esteemed nobleman, both of whom were carried by sudden death into the presence of the Saviour whom they had learned so ardently to love and manfully to serve.

Their bereaved mother thus wrote to Mr. North:—

"HADDO HOUSE, *Jan. 3rd*, 1872.

"DEAR MR. NORTH, ... This season of the year brings back very vividly to my mind the remembrance of that never-to-be-forgotten time when you were here. Do you recollect reading the fifty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, and the short prayer afterwards? My darling George asked that they might not be as the thorns, but like young fir-trees, bearing fruit to God. Often afterwards, when I saw those two boys growing such fine-looking men, and being what they were, I remembered that day, and I thought of that verse in the Psalms, 'The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, and grow like the cedar in Lebanon.' Now the following verse is appropriate, 'Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.' He has taken them out of this world, but they are transplanted, I firmly trust, into the courts of our God. I hope you are well in health, and much encouraged in your work.

"Believe me, yours very truly and gratefully,

"M. ABERDEEN."

A sketch of the short life of the younger of these two brothers, the Hon. James Gordon, in memory of

whom the Dowager-Countess of Aberdeen founded The Gordon Memorial Mission, in connection with the Free Church Missions in South Africa, has already been written by that prince of missionaries, and man of apostolic mould, Dr. Alexander Duff. The following extracts from letters which he wrote, in the year following his own conversion, although not addressed to Mr. North, but to a young friend, contain clear evidence of the abundant fruit of his message as received into this prepared soil, and show us how very rapidly the work of grace had matured in the heart of one who was then only nineteen years of age.

A Cambridge Student's Letter.

"Dear ——, As for yourself, do not be afraid. You say you are not sure that you are safe. If you are *saved*, then you are *safe*. 'Fear not, for I have redeemed thee. Fear not, for I am with thee. Fear not, for I will help thee.' But you must give your whole heart to Jesus; keep nothing back. Remember, He gave up all for us, and we must give up all for Him, if we would be His; and how little that is in comparison with what He gave up for us! For His were no common sufferings. The very fact of being clogged and held down by a body like ours must have been torment to the King of Glory, who had been Lord of all from eternity. He, too, had bitter struggles with the devil, and therefore He is able to succour us when we are tempted, and to sympathise with us. I am sure you must have a hard fight; but if you confess Christ openly, and come boldly out to take up your position under His banner in answer to His call, 'Who is on the Lord's side?' then He will give you strength. I am sure, when we look

back on the time of our warfare on earth, we shall wonder why we were so faint-hearted and so cold, when we had such a glorious reward before us. We shall wonder how it was that we were not willing rather to go through fire and sword, through flood and flame, to prove our love to Him who loved us with such exceeding love.

"The old year will soon be gone. It is a solemn thing to look back on a whole year, and to think how much of it we have wasted, and worse than wasted. Truly the Lord is long-suffering and gracious, or He would long ago have cut us off for ever. There are many thoughts which come into my mind at such a time. Last New Year's Eve I went to bed with scarce a thought about my soul,

> 'I knew not my danger, I felt not my load,
> Jehovah-Tsidkenu was nothing to me.'

But the very next day, by the grace of God, I was brought to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.* Yes, New Year's Day, the birthday of the year, is the birthday of my soul, and ten million years from this time I shall be singing the praises of Him who on that day called me into His marvellous light. 'Hallelujah, hallelujah! salvation to our God!' And there, too, will be the harpers harping with their harps, and the angels, ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, their voices as the sound of many waters, all singing the praises of the King. And the ransomed of the Lord shall be there, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands, and crowns on their heads, singing, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain;' and you and I shall be among that number; for Jesus has said that if we come to Him, He will receive us; and when He has received us, no man shall pluck us out of His hand: we are safe for

* For an account of Mr. North's visit, which was so blessed to this family, see "Visit to Haddo House" in chap. xii.

time and for eternity; we are His, and He is ours. 'My beloved is mine, and I am His: I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: I am my beloved's, and His desire is towards me' (Song of Sol. ii. 16, vi. 3, vii. 10). 'Fear not; thou art mine.' Let us then be mindful of the great reward. Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking right to Jesus, and through Him to glory, honour, and immortality.

"Try to confess Christ openly before men, and to speak often of His name, and the Lord will hearken and hear, and will write it in a book of remembrance, and you shall be His in that day when He makes up His jewels (Mal. iii. 17).

"Yours affectionately,

"J. H. GORDON."

The next letters are from a lady residing in the North of England, who has ever since been actively engaged in the work of the Lord, in which she has been largely owned, having been the means through her classes, and otherwise, of bringing not a few to the knowledge and love of the Saviour.

AN ENGLISH LADY'S LETTER.

"*March 3rd*, 1862.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I desire to express my warm gratitude, first to God, and then to you, who were the means to me of enlightening and quickening in the way of grace. I attended every one of your public weekday addresses during my visit to Edinburgh, and was led by them to regard religion as a more real personal thing than before. I have known these things as long as I can remember, with the head perfectly, but my heart had become so accustomed to them, that I took them all as a matter of course, and thought for years that I was a Christian. On hearing you, however, I

doubted it, and was very unhappy for some weeks, going about to establish my own righteousness, trying to make myself better before I came to Christ, and miserable because I could not '*feel*' good, nor sorry, nor anything that I ought to feel; and this remained up to the middle of your last address, Thursday, Feb. 27th, on Romans x. 1—4. Then I saw, by God's Spirit, that I must not consult my 'feelings' any longer, but give up all my own righteousness, the good as well as the bad; and I was the more ready to do this, having proved that my righteousness was as filthy rags; and that I must take Christ's righteousness as my own, a free gift imputed to me. And I have been joyful in Him ever since. Now I know what faith means, and why it is 'precious faith.' I could not before understand those words, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,' for I did not know what to believe about Him. But now all things are new: the Bible has depths I never saw before; Jesus Christ is to me 'wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.' I cannot praise Him enough for revealing Himself to me; and I am most grateful to you, dear sir, as having been the means of showing me this new life. I thank you especially for having shown it so clearly in the Bible; for now, if any doubts arise, I can turn at once to those precious passages, Romans iii. 20—24, and x. 1—4, which brought me, through the grace of God, life and salvation. . . .

"I remain, with deep gratitude, yours sincerely,

"M. J. F."

Eight years later the same lady, amid much bodily weakness, was engaged in active service of her Lord, and wrote on 31st, Dec. 1870, mentioning several instances of conversion appearing in some young persons whom she was teaching. She goes on to say—

"Do pray for these. Is it not good of God to let me see so much now? I can but stand by, hands folded, and look on with wonder. And it *is* humiliating, and therefore good, after I have been working away for years at a person with little or no success, to see God take it all out of my hands, and do it almost in a day by His sovereign will. Indeed, the *life-giving* is just His work alone, as much as the creation of the world. . . . We have such encouragement to pray for souls, for surely God must be more willing than we are to have them saved. I am trying to put away the old thought, that God had to be intreated to do some hard or difficult thing, for it is the very thing *He died to do.*"*

In the next chapter the reader will find Mr. North's replies to some of these letters, and to others of a similar character, from persons asking to be shown the way of life, or to be guided in that way.

* An interesting record of some of the results of this lady's subsequent labours for the Lord will be found in a little volume, "Warfare and Victory," just published by Seeley and Co.

BROWNLOW NORTH'S PORTFOLIO.—LETTERS FROM BROWNLOW NORTH TO ANXIOUS INQUIRERS, YOUNG CONVERTS, AND PERSONAL FRIENDS.

"O friend beloved, whose curious skill
Keeps bright the last year's leaves and flowers,
With warm, glad summer thoughts to fill
The cold, dark winter hours!
Pressed on thy heart, the leaves I bring
May well defy the wintry cold,
Until in heaven's eternal spring
Life's fairer ones unfold." WHITTIER.

"I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. I write unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcom he wicked one."—1 JOHN ii. 12, 14.

VIII.

MR. NORTH seldom if ever wrote even a short note without mentioning the name of the Master whom he served and loved, and referring to the progress of His work or the teaching of His word. The abundance of his heart sought utterance in his most familiar intercourse with his friends, whether by speech or pen. We have found it, however, difficult to procure letters written wholly upon religious topics, as these were generally directed to strangers, and sometimes in distinct letters the same line of thought is followed. We hope that those contained in this chapter may prove as useful to others as to those to whom they were originally addressed. The first letters are addressed to Miss O——, Edinburgh, two of whose letters to Mr. North were given in chapter vii.

LETTER TO A YOUNG DISCIPLE.

"NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, *Thursday, May 13th*, 1858.

"Your last letter has been forwarded to me to this place, and I received it and your former one with much pleasure. May you seek and obtain strength from the Lord Jesus Christ to perform the covenant you have entered into; for remember His own words, 'Without me ye can do nothing;' and let your present feelings and confidences be what they

may, be sure of this, that unless you abide in Him, and His words abide in you, you will perish at the last, like the stony-ground hearers, who, when tribulation ariseth for the word's sake, are offended, and fall away. I write not these things to trouble you, but as my beloved child I warn you; for you have a terrible conflict before you, and have need of the whole armour of God on the right hand and the left. Your enemies are *exactly* described, and not one jot or tittle exaggerated, in Eph. vi. 12; therefore, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, buckle on what God has provided for you; and *never* counting yourself to have attained, but ever coveting earnestly more and more of Christ's true riches, that you may lavish them as fast as you receive them on those who have need, go boldly forward, strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, looking unto Jesus, who, for the joy set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame. Remember, *looking unto Jesus* is the great safety. Perpetually endeavour to realize His real personal presence and existence, and then what this real person has done and suffered for you, and so you will catch something of His Spirit, and will be willing to do or suffer for Him. Do not take your Christianity from the example of those around you, however excellent they may be, but study the life of Jesus, how He acted and how He spoke, and strive to speak and act as He did. Above all, be constant in private prayer. Beware of the first beginnings of shortening private prayer. Be you hot, cold, or lukewarm, still pray; and going as you are to God, ask Him for *Christ's sake* to make you what you should be. May the Lord make you a burning and shining light, remembering that humility is the first of the Christian graces, and may He give you to win many souls by your chaste conversation and meek and quiet spirit. (See 1 Peter iii. 3, 4.) I have written more than I intended when I commenced. May God bless it to

you. And ever remember there is *no truth in us, in our hearts;* that the *only truth* is in the *Word of God.* He that trusteth in his heart is a fool, but he that believeth in the Lord Jesus Christ *shall be saved,* saved not only from the punishment of sin, but from the power of it. So when your heart says one thing, and the Lord another, believe Him whom you have now, in the presence of God, of men, of angels, of devils, taken for better, for worse, to love, honour, and obey, as your Lord and your God."

A letter written on the same day in very similar terms to another young convert was found long afterwards, after her death, by her husband, bearing marks of constant perusal.

TO THE SAME.

"DUNDEE, *Nov. 12th,* 1859.

"MY DEAR MISS O——, Your letter, dated the 28th September, has been a great deal too long unanswered. Again and again have I meant to write; but if you knew how I require rest, and shrink both from writing and speaking more than is absolutely necessary, I am sure you would pardon me. I read your letter with great pleasure, for though I am not able to answer nearly all I get, yet I am very glad to hear how those I am interested in are going on, and your letter was very encouraging to me. May the Lord bless you and keep you, and make you an honoured instrument in His hands to bring Him much glory; but remember that you must let *nothing* lead you to neglect your own soul. Private prayer and private reading are absolutely necessary for spiritual health and life, and it is in the closet that we must seek for the Holy Spirit to tell us that in the ear which we may after proclaim to the benefit of our fellow-sinners. Give my Christian love to your dear sister, and tell her that I can

say with John, that I have no greater pleasure than to hear that my children walk in the truth. May the Lord minister bread to both your souls, multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness. Now is the time to be always abounding in the work of the Lord—*in due time* we shall reap, *if we faint not.* I trust A. B. is well, soul and body. Give her my Christian regards, and tell her to be watchful against the *pride* and naughtiness of her heart. How much need the very best of us have of this caution, lest we should think ourselves somebody when we are *nothing!* I am delighted to hear what you tell me about Miss C——. I saw her for a minute the last time I was in Edinburgh, and was much pleased. May the Lord Jesus, that good Shepherd, watch over us all. Be sure and pray for me, and always expect to do me good. I hope to be in Edinburgh for a few days before going to London, where I expect to preach about the 18th of December. Believe me, with much interest in you and your sister,

"Yours in the very best of bonds,

"BROWNLOW NORTH."

The next letter is from Mr. North, in reply to a gentleman who was troubled with rationalistic difficulties, and who was apparently rejecting the gospel on their account. In his letter he had stated two difficulties, the first relating to the Divinity of the Lord Jesus, and the second as to the equitableness of God's having attached a penalty to man's fall, seeing that fall was foreknown by Him, and therefore fore-ordained.

LETTER TO A RATIONALISTIC OBJECTOR.

"*March 24th*, 1859.

"SIR,—You may easily imagine I have little time for letter-writing. I return your letter, that you may, by having

it by you, better understand my answer. Until you are willing to condescend and humble yourself to *every one* who is likely to be better instructed than yourself in divine things, you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Secondly, *man* is *not* to *ask*, but *believe*. The natural man has *no reason* that can help him, no spiritual discernment. Read (first going on your knees, and asking in Christ's name for God's Spirit to lead you) the first three chapters of 1st Corinthians, beginning at the eighteenth verse of the first chapter; read two or three times carefully, and may you be taught to cease from your own wisdom, and to seek the 'Spirit which is of God, that you may know the things which are freely given to you of God' (ii. 1, 2). *It is written*, 'The just shall live by faith;' and, God helping me, *I* have made up my mind to stand or fall with Jesus Christ. If He is the *truth*, I am saved; if He is the truth, the man who leans to his own understanding is *damned!* Awful position! No safety except Christ. Christ tells me in the fifth of John, verses 19, 23, 'that whatsoever things the Father doeth, the same doeth the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.' *I do so;* therefore, if I do wrong, I plead His own word; I can't do more. The Bible is full of that which can only be received by faith. I never try to reconcile. It is certain damnation, that is, if we refuse to receive what we cannot reconcile. See the irreconcilable yet heavenly thing, 'And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven' (John iii. 12, 13). Your second question I answer as Paul did the blasphemer's in Romans ix. 18, 19, *Because God chose it*, and it will not lessen the agony of the penalty, that through the countless ages of eternity you continue asking,

* His correspondent had said it was only from a few in this world that one could *condescend* to ask instruction.

why? why? Let it be sufficient for you,—*It is so.* Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? and though the answer to your question is not revealed, it is revealed that if you will *do* His *will*, you shall know of the doctrine, whether Christ spoke of Himself, or whether it be of God. Crucify therefore your own pride and carnal inclinations, as one who feels eternity to be at stake. I would wrestle with you in the name of Jesus for the Holy Spirit to lead you. Diligently shape your life as He directs you. May He bless you! I send you the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th verses of the third of Proverbs: 'Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.' Take the counsel there contained, and the promise in the last verse *shall be fulfilled* in *you*.

"Yours with much interest,

"BROWNLOW NORTH."

TO ONE WHO HAD BENEFITED BY HIS PREACHING.

"STRATHLEVEN, DUMBARTON, *Dec. 30th*, 1858.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I must send you a line to say how heartily I congratulate you on the news you are able to give me about A——. May the Lord bless and keep him, and He most surely will if he will only believe God's word, and not his own lying heart and feelings. Nothing can prevent God's doing the mightiest of works in and for every poor sinner that goes to Him, but unbelief. You pray, and the answer too often is, 'I can do no mighty work because of your unbelief.' The command is, 'Whatever you ask, believe that you receive.' It would be good for us all if we would look at God more as 'the God of truth,' and whenever anything is suggested to our belief, to ask ourselves, 'Can

this that I feel or think be true if God is true? and if it *cannot*, then make God *truth*, and your own heart the liar. All sin has its origin in making the devil the God of truth, and God the Father of lies. This is the cause why the careless man continues in sin, and the anxious man in unbelief. They believe the statements of their own spirit, and disbelieve the words of God's Spirit. Give my kindest Christian love to your dear husband, and ask him to read the enclosed, a copy of which I purpose to send to every minister in Scotland.

"B. N."

The enclosure here referred to was a copy of that very useful leaflet which Mr. North published under the title of "Six Short Rules for Young Christians," and which is worthy of being preserved in this volume.

SIX SHORT RULES FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS.*

I.

Never neglect daily private prayer; and when you pray, remember that God is present, and that He hears your prayers. (Heb. xi. 6.)

II.

Never neglect daily private Bible-reading; and when you read, remember that God is speaking to you, and that you are to believe and act upon what He says. I believe all backsliding begins with the neglect of these two rules. (John v. 39.)

III.

Never let a day pass without trying to do something for Jesus. Every night reflect on what Jesus has done for

* This tract was published by James Taylor, Castle Street, Edinburgh.

you, and then ask yourself, What am I doing for Him? (Matt. v. 13—16.)

IV.

If ever you are in doubt as to a thing being right or wrong, go to your room, and kneel down and ask God's blessing upon it. (Col. iii. 17.) If you cannot do this, it is wrong. (Rom. xiv. 23.)

V.

Never take your Christianity from Christians, or argue that because such and such people do so and so, that therefore you may. (2 Cor. x. 12.) You are to ask yourself, "How would Christ act in my place?" and strive to follow Him. (John x. 27.)

VI.

Never believe what you feel, if it contradicts God's Word. Ask yourself, Can what I feel be true, if God's Word is true? and if *both* cannot be true, believe God, and make your own heart the liar. (Rom. iii. 4; 1 John v. 10, 11.)

The Duchess of Gordon appears to have assisted Mr. North in bringing this unpretending but very useful leaflet under the notice of every minister in Scotland. A few days after the date of the above letter she writes:—

"The Lodge, Huntly, *Jan. 3rd*, 1859.

"My dear Mr. North,—I thank you much for your letter, and do most cordially desire for you the richest blessings of Christ's own covenant, all sure in Him, sealed by His blood, administered by His Holy Spirit, acted on by His grace. Truly everlasting praise is due to the Father, Son, and Spirit for all He has done in you and by you. Oh, how much I have to thank and praise for all His many

mercies and love during the past year! I like your tract very much, and thank you for allowing me the privilege of helping to send it. With much sincere and affectionate Christian regard,

"I am, yours very truly,

"E. GORDON."

The Duchess of Gordon had been the means of his previous awakening, and must have deeply sorrowed when the fair blossom went up as dust, and yielded no fruit; and now she rejoiced that the tree, which had borne nothing but leaves, was bringing forth a plentiful harvest of fruit to the glory of God the great husbandman, who had spared it in mercy, and digged about it, and watered it by His grace.

Only a few weeks after this the Duchess's heart was filled to overflowing with gratitude for a remarkable work of the Lord in Huntly, in her own house and in her schools. She wrote to my father, "A baby of four was sobbing, so that Mr. Radcliffe [who was then greatly blessed in Aberdeenshire] took her in his arms to find out if she was hurt. 'Oh, no, only while you were praying I felt my heart so hard I could not love Jesus.' Jesus is all their cry. Mrs. A. says, 'Siccan a bargain as the Lord has made wi' me. He's ta'en my son, and He's gien me His ain Son.' Blessed Jesus."

TO THE SAME FRIEND.

"GARTHLAND, *Thursday, Jan. 20th*, 1859.

"I received and read your letter, my very dear friend, with exceeding joy and thankfulness. May God the Holy Spirit enable you *ever* to *hold fast* the blessed hope He has

enabled you to embrace, and teach you to remember that of all the ungodly deeds in the power of ungodly men to commit, there is none on which such hopeless destruction is denounced as against disobedience to the gospel. May God write your own words in your letter to me, with His own power on your heart, and may they help you in time of need. 'If I am afraid to commit myself for fear Jesus fails me, *then* I shall surely be put to shame; but I *will* commit myself, for Jesus is true, and whosoever believeth *in Him* shall *not* be put to shame.' 'Trust in Him *at all times*,' is a text that has been greatly blessed to my own soul again and again, for it is *God's commandment;* and let the circumstances of the case be what they may, so long as it is 'a time,' the commandment is 'Trust.' The dinner gong stopped me. Since then the post has brought me two letters, one from Mr. Campbell Dun, enclosing a letter from a friend (it looks like Mr. Ryle), wanting me to address the London Young Men's Christian Association in Exeter Hall; and the other from Lady Queensberry, asking us to go and visit her; such a nice, humble letter. May the Lord Jesus direct me, and may His Spirit govern me! His spirit was to seek His Father's glory, and not His own, and to do His Father's will; and His Father gave Him commandment what He should say and what He should speak, and He did always those things which pleased Him. Pray for me, my dear, dear friends. If I am filled with the Spirit, what may I not do with the open door I have! May my will be His will; only may He hasten the time when there shall be no more curse, but all shall know the Lord. Dear sister, your letter did make me so happy. Remember henceforth, the *word*, not *the heart*, is the Foundation, the Rock, and *that* will ever be the same.

"Yours with much Christian love,

"BROWNLOW NORTH."

The next letters have a somewhat interesting history connected with them. The gentleman to whom they were addressed (Mr. W. F. McAuslane, now secretary of the Glasgow Association for the Relief of Incurables), was in 1863 on the staff of the Glasgow Morning Journal newspaper, and went in that capacity to report one of Mr. North's services which was held in the Queen's Rooms, Glasgow, in that year. As a boy he had come under religious impressions, but was ignorant of those truths the knowledge of which is essential to salvation. After some years he had the privilege of sitting under a faithful preacher of Christ, who showed clearly the way in which salvation had been procured for the sinner; but like many others, his young hearer did not understand clearly the way in which the sinner could come into personal possession of this salvation. He did not understand that *faith* is the instrument of a sinner's justification, and was in the dark as to the answer of prayer and assurance of pardon.

It was while in this state of mind, out of which he was experiencing no deliverance, that he was sent to report this service. Mr. North took for his text, Psalm cxix. 25, 26, 27, dwelling much on verse 26, "I have declared my ways, and Thou heardest me," and through the views then presented the Lord sent him light and deliverance. Some months afterwards he wrote to Mr. North, wishing still clearer light, especially on the subject of the assurance that our

prayers are answered, and that pardon has been bestowed. Mr. North wrote in reply :—

ON THE ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS.

"DEAR SIR,—I have received your most interesting letter, and regret that I have not found time to reply to it sooner. I have now great pleasure in answering the questions you propose to me, as far as my own light and knowledge enable me. May God the Holy Spirit, for Jesus Christ's sake, teach us both.

"1. You are to believe God's word without any other warrant whatever, simply because it is God's word; but doing so will necessarily produce peace and joy. Feelings are to flow out of faith, not faith out of feelings. If you *really* desire the pardon of God, and His favour, I believe you have it, because *He says* He will give it you if you ask it for Christ's sake; you *must be* glad.

"2. Yes, if what God says and what you feel cannot both be true, let God be true, and your own heart the liar.

"3. The feelings which faith should produce are love, joy, peace, a hatred of sin, and a desire after holiness. No doubt they will vary, because our faith varies, and all in us is variable; but we should ever remember that He *never* varies, but is always the same to us (Mal. iii. 6). Satan's great object is to get us not to trust God, but God's command is, 'Trust in Him at all times' (Ps. lxxii. 8).

"4. When you can see Christ, you may look at your sins, your frames, or anything else you please; but when in darkness or doubt, or fancying yourself without Christ, you must look at nothing but Him. You must leave every other object of contemplation, and gaze at what He is, what He says, and what He has done. For He says, 'I am the Beginning,' 'the Alpha,' 'the Foundation;' and we must begin with and also build all on Him.

"May God make clear to you what you desire to understand. Endeavour to obey the injunction contained in the first eleven verses of 2 Peter i., and try and DO righteousness, whether you *like it* or not. It is never said *like it*, but *do it*. And recollect God's definition of love in 1 Cor. xiii. 6, John xiv. 21, 'He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.' With much interest,

"Yours sincerely,

"BROWNLOW NORTH."

This letter afforded Mr. McAuslane much comfort, but this was interrupted by a minister observing that 1 John i. 9, "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins," was a promise for Christians, and that a sinner was not entitled to appropriate it. Mr. McAuslane again wrote to Mr. North in his difficulty, and Mr. North's reply gave him comfort and peace.

"MY DEAR SIR,—In regard to your friend's statement, that 1 John i. 9 was written for Christians, I answer, that a Christian is a man who believes what God says in the gospel of His Son, and that a man becomes a Christian the moment he believes. Scripture cannot contradict itself, and no confession of sin is considered as such by God, where there is not an intention to resist it and forsake it; but the man who goes to God by Jesus Christ, and asks for pardon for His sake, and does not believe he gets it, makes God a liar, as much as does the man who says he has no sin. See 1 John i. 10, in connection with the previous verse. If we confess our sins, and say we do not know whether He has forgiven us or not, when He says His faithfulness and justice are pledged for our pardon, we make Him a liar. I believe faith to be a thing of degrees, and that a

person may be in a state of salvation, and yet be very hopeless and desponding. Such a state however is quite foreign to the intention of the gospel. There is a great difference between faith and fellowship and communion. This is promised to a certain line of conduct pursued after faith. Believe me, with much interest,

"Yours in Jesus,

"BROWNLOW NORTH."*

Although Mr. McAuslane after this frequently corresponded with Mr. North, he writes under date Dec. 22nd, 1877:—

"I had the pleasure of a *personal* interview with Mr. North only once, and that not long before his death. It was at the Dundas Street station in Glasgow. I was on my way to Kirkintilloch, and seeing him on the platform could not resist the impulse to speak to him. On mentioning my name, he shook me most cordially by the hand, remarking, 'How was I, without your introducing yourself, to know you from any of the rest of Adam's children? I rejoice over you.' In the happiness of the moment I forgot my business, and was reminded of it by seeing the train moving off, and it was with some difficulty I overtook it in the tunnel. I had to tear myself away, and I never saw him more. I trust, however, I shall see him yet again. His memory I gratefully and lovingly cherish,

"Yours sincerely,

"W. T. MCAUSLANE."

The next letter was written to the lady, two of whose letters are given in chapter vii., who was

* These letters are extracted with the author's kind permission from an interesting little book, "Prayer, Pardon, and Peace." Morgan and Chase, London.

brought to the Saviour through his ministry, and is a reply to her letter on p. 181.

To a Christian Worker.

"Plymouth, *Feb.* 16*th*, 1871.

"I do so thank God for all He has done for you, and in you and by you. I rejoice over my 'grandchildren' [so called because they were the spiritual children of one of whom he was the father in Christ], and firmly believe that through your conversion children's children yet unborn shall praise the Lord. To Him be the praise, for no one knows better than yourself that it is only when *He* gives it that there is any blessing. I am sorry in a natural sense that you are not in better health, but I am so persuaded that God is dealing with you as a child whom He loveth, and that all things are working together for your good, that I am unable to wish anything altered, or rather to ask Him to alter anything, only to keep you abiding in Him and He in you in a continually growing and closer union. How I do rejoice with you in what God has permitted you to see of the fruit of your work for Him! and by this time I trust you have seen some more."

To the same.

"Tunbridge, *Feb.*, 1873.

"Many, many happy returns of your birthday to you! and I know you will have them, if not here, in a better land; for you have had another birthday, even a spiritual, and can never die. Were it not so, one hardly knows how to congratulate; but 'I thank my God on every remembrance of you,' as Paul said to the Philippians, and most heartily congratulate you, and put you in mind that every birthday your salvation from every trial and sickness and sorrow is a year nearer than when you believed. And then I suspect that by this time I am a great-grandfather at least, so that

by the grace of God we can both say with our Elder Brother, 'Behold me, and the children that God has given me.' Surely it is worth all the cross-bearing to be honoured to bring sinners to God. May *He* bless you more and more, and enable you as you grow in years to grow in grace."

At another time he wrote to the same correspondent:—

"I think it is decidedly unscriptural to fix any time with God for His doing anything. The times and seasons the Father hath put in His own hand. The man Christ Jesus has asked for the heathen, and He *will* get them, but He has waited eighteen hundred years already, and has told us that as man He knows nothing of the 'when.' Pray on, and believe; you *shall* reap."

The next letters are like many similar ones written to his old and dear friend, Miss Gordon of Wardhouse.

LETTER TO AN OLD FRIEND.

"DEAREST AUNTIE,—I enclose two letters for you to read, as I think they will strengthen and refresh you. A. B. is one of my earliest converts in Aberdeen in 1856: you will see how she is keeping and has been kept. The *friend* she speaks of as being in darkness is a soldier to whom she was engaged, and wrote to break it off after hearing my sermon when last in Aberdeen. The other letter is from a very respectable man, a baker, about forty years of age, who was converted on the 28th November, 1858. I enclose also a third letter to show dear H. that persecution is not confined to Aberdeen, but 'he that endureth to the end shall be saved.' In Christ, and looking unto Him, is our strength. Fear not; only believe, only believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God always present, measuring

out every trial, and not suffering to be tempted further than in the end shall be for God's glory and our own real good, for the trial and exercise of our faith. Untried faith is no faith.

"Here [he was preaching in Paisley at the time] all is most encouraging. A daily prayer-meeting is established to meet this night for the first time: churches not nearly able to hold the people, and last night I spoke from half-past six to ten, to about 2,500. At a quarter before nine I finished the service and pronounced the blessing, inviting all to remain who liked, *if they were willing from that day to be Jesus' true disciples.* Not 150 left, the whole congregation remained, and I spoke to them for another hour. On the Friday, 1,500 were present. Praise the Lord, O my soul! Christ and His things are great tangible realities. Only *act* on them. I can write no more. Love much. Special service to-night in Johnstone, and Sunday at Lochwinnoch. The Lord be with you all.

"Ever your truly affectionate

"BROWNLOW NORTH."

TO THE SAME, REGARDING HIS WORK.

"34, UNION STREET, GREENOCK, *Monday.*

"I received your letter, my dearest auntie, with much pleasure, and though I have a very large correspondence, and headache to boot, will, God willing, send you a few lines.

"You will be glad to hear that I have every reason to hope that my more than merciful God and Saviour is daily forgiving me all my blunders and wickedness, and blessing the words that He enables me to speak of His truth. It would take sheets and days to write you anything like a detailed account of the appearances of good in Glasgow; and since I have left they have been, I think, fully proportionate in other places. In S., where I was staying for a week, preaching in the neighbourhood, the six-foot-two

London butler was two mornings in my bedroom, before I was up, on his knees in prayer, and has been over here to-day to see me, still in the same mind; and the same spirit appears to have aroused that house, from the mistress to the dairy-maid, which latter sent for me after I had retired to my room for the night, to come to speak with her, on the evening preceding my leaving. God willing, I go back there on Thursday for a week, and then to Edinburgh, to preach in Moody-Stuart's on the 14th. In Rothesay, too, the appearances were most encouraging. To God be ALL the glory, ALL the thanks. Let us not limit Him. His goodness is overpowering; but '*it is just like Him*.' Last night I preached in one of the Established churches here; to-morrow, God willing, in the Free Middle Church; on Thursday, Dr. Mac Culloch's, Established. The Established are opening much more freely since Norman Macleod opened his church to me. I am much pleased with all the letters I get from C. D.; still I feel very anxious about her. I wish the dear Duchess would ask her to Huntly Lodge. I trust her cold is better. Give her my warmest Christian regards.

"Dearest Auntie, I have much to write and think about. All the doctors are crying, 'Rest, rest.' May the Lord Jesus Christ keep us, soul and body, to His own glory and the good of our fellows! We are *not* our own. Love.

"Your affectionate

"BROWNLOW NORTH."

TO A FRIEND, ACCOMPANYING THE GIFT OF A BIBLE.

"MY DEAR ——, Accept from me this copy of God's Holy Word, as a small mark of very much regard and affection. I thank God for the good work which I trust He has begun in you; but I would take this opportunity of urging on you not to count yourself to have attained, but to study with all diligence to go on unto perfection,

remembering that *perfection is the likeness of God.* This perfection is only to be obtained by a spiritual knowledge and a spiritual practice of the truths contained in this Book. Therefore, not only read, but *search* the Scriptures daily, and be sure that there is no source from which so much useful knowledge is to be obtained as from the Bible. But remember that its words are *spirit* (John vi. 6—8), and can only be profitably received by the teaching of the Spirit; therefore be much in prayer *for the teaching of the Spirit.* Thus reading, and thus praying, you have a scriptural warrant to expect that He who wrote the Bible will tell you words in secret, which shall not only be life to your own soul, but which, when you proclaim as you have opportunity to others, shall be to the glory of God and the good of men.

"That God for Jesus Christ may bless you and keep you, multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness, is the earnest and heartfelt prayer of

"Yours very affectionately,

"BROWNLOW NORTH."

James iv. 7, 8; 1 Cor. iii. 19; Col. iii. 11; 1 Cor. i. 30.

The next letter is one written at a considerably later date than those already given, having been written, very shortly after her being brought to Christ, to a young lady who was one of the fruits of his ministry in London, in the Rev. Adolph Saphir's church, in 1873.

LETTER TO A YOUNG DISCIPLE.

"34 SUSSEX PLACE, KENSINGTON, W., *May 26th*, 1873.

"MY DEAR MISS E——, I sit down with the full intention of writing to you, as you ask me to do, a very long letter; that is, of getting to the end of this big sheet of

paper, which, if I do, will be as long a letter as I have written for years. I naturally feel a great interest in you as my child in the Lord, and have great pleasure in writing to you. May the Lord enable me to say a word or two worth reading. What a marvellous blessing your visit to London has been to you! what a treasure God has given you to carry home with you! not merely 'the unsearchable riches of Christ,' so that you not only have abundance of all really good things for yourself, but *to spare*, so that you can give to others, and make them as rich as yourself; but He has given you *Christ Himself!* *He* is yours, and you are His, and you may boldly say so. He is *in you*, your Lord, your Husband, your Brother, your Friend, your Counsellor, your Saviour, your God. Oh be faithful! *He* is faithful who hath called you; and through Him, and by His strength, you can do all things; and He has said He will never leave you nor forsake you. Therefore fear not, dear Miss E., no matter what may be the cross He may see fit to call on you to bear. Learn Isaiah li. 12, 13, by heart, and pray God to bless the word to you, and then, looking unto Jesus, 'be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.'

"I cannot tell you how delighted I was to find you occupied as I did the last time I saw you. It strengthened my heart, and gave me courage to hope that through your instrumentality I shall be found the father of many grandchildren. May it please God to make Mrs. A. one of them. I hope you will not lose sight of her, and if you have any news to tell me of her, please let me know it. I have had much to encourage me ever since I saw you. God is so good to me. Yesterday I preached at the Agricultural Hall. After the service one tall old gentleman on the platform came up to me with tears in his eyes, and thanked me for what he had heard, and before I got off the

platform another came in the same way. Two on that small platform! There were about 3,000 hearers. Oh, may the blessing over the whole have been at least in the like proportion! On Sunday next I preach, God willing, in a church near here, and on Monday go to stay with Lord Cavan for a few days at Weston-super-Mare, returning to preach for Mr. Saphir on the evening of the 8th. Remember me in prayer especially that night.

"Yours with true Christian interest and affection,

"BROWNLOW NORTH."

A year later he wrote to the same lady a letter from which we extract a few sentences.

"GLASGOW, *April 8th*, 1874.

"MY DEAR MISS E——, I am filled with shame at myself when I look at the date of your kind and most interesting letter, which was sent to me here, and is now before me; but the truth is, that I am so overworked, that I look with dread at letter-writing. I thank God, who has enabled you in spite of crosses to persevere in His ways. Go on, dear child, nothing terrified by your adversaries, and in due season you shall reap.

"What you tell about my tract, and your tract distribution, is most interesting, and I will order a quantity of different ones I have written to be sent to you, carriage free, on hearing that you are still at home, and would like to have them. You speak of 'complete sanctification.' I do *not* believe that any one will ever attain to it *here;* but for all that, we are to strive after it, because *He* tells us to. In so doing we may get near it, but the man who is nearest it will be the last to say he has it. I shall be so glad to accept your drawing, but keep it till about Christmas, and then send it to me at 34, Sussex Place, Kensington. Send me a line, and never think I am not interested in you

because I do not write; for I am always, though very busy,

"Very heartily yours in Jesus,
"BROWNLOW NORTH."

LETTER TO A FRIEND IN AFFLICTION.

"KEITH HALL, INVERURIE, *Sept. 19th*, 1874.

"Thank you, my dearest Mrs. A., for your deeply interesting letter received yesterday. H. is indeed 'an epistle known and read' of all who have the privilege of her acquaintance, and one for whom both you and I 'thank God upon every remembrance' of her. I do trust and pray she may be spared to us, and to many who love her, and she seems herself to think she shall. The most she says, however, is, that if it is God's will, she is willing. For all her goodness, however, no one on earth is perfect; and after what her doctor told her about stimulants, had she sunk for the want of them she would have been greatly guilty, and I sincerely hope she will not persist in that, should the doctor again find it necessary to tell her she must take them. I had a beautiful letter written in pencil, sweet child! from her the other day. Tell her I will answer it, God willing, in a day or two, but this will give you both all that I have to say at present. I sent her letter to Grace [Mrs. North]. I know it will please her to see that H. in the midst of her own troubles so affectionately remembered her. As to you, dearest Mrs. A., you are evidently amongst those the Lord loveth and chasteneth. First, your dear granddaughter's illness, then your own, and now H.'s (not to speak of bitterness which your own heart alone knoweth), are every one of them the distinctive orderings of a loving Father, and among the 'light tribulation' which is but for a moment, and which is working for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Wherefore, though sorrowful, be always rejoicing, for 'it is the Lord, and *He* doeth all things

well.' I go to Lord Aberdeen's, God willing, on the 22nd, till Tuesday, 29th, when I go to the Brown-Douglases. Let me have a line as soon as you can find time, to tell me of dear H.; and, by-the-bye, would you kindly get the music to which dear Mary set Minnie Douglas's pretty words, "What is Death?" Give my very kindest love to your husband. Love to H. and the chickens.

"Yours most lovingly,

"BROWNLOW NORTH."

TO THE SAME.

"GRANTHAM HOUSE, PUTNEY HEATH,

"LONDON, *Nov.* 14*th*, 1874.

"I have a great dislike, dearest Mrs. A., of asking you to write letters; but as you say there is no such bond of love and affection as that which links together the giver and receiver of spiritual blessing, and I am very fond both of you and your sister, and now that she is so ill, hovering as it were on the very verge of heaven, I feel very anxious, not only to hear how she is, but what she is doing, what she is saying. Do please send me a long letter, all about her and yourself; and what effects what they witness in her has on your very lovable husband and her father. I do pray that at her bedside, the one, seeing the power of Christ, may become a true convert to Christianity, and the other be brought more and more to see the hollowness of all that is merely of the earth, and to turn from dumb idols to serve the only living and true God, and to wait for His Son, who *will* come from heaven: and do you both pray the same for me; for though the idols of one man differ from the idols of another, I fear there are few who are not guilty of the sin, and to whom Paul's injunction, 'Beloved, flee from idolatry,' is unnecessary.

"I do trust when you write your account of dearest H., she will be better as to health. I have no doubt that as far

as her spiritual health is concerned it will be most refreshing. And it *must* be a great privilege to be near her just now. I did not like to say anything about it, because it would have been purely selfish, but I cannot tell you how disappointed I was at its not being possible for me to see her. Give her my fond love, and once more Philip. i. 3.

"Yours always,

"BROWNLOW NORTH."

BROWNLOW NORTH'S THEOLOGY AND PREACHING.

"The creeds have gone, so speaks the age ;
The era of the sects is past :
Forward in spite of saint or sage,
True freedom has begun at last.
Not faith in God, but faith in man
Is pilot now, and sail, and oar ;
The creeds are shrivelled, cold, and wan,
The Christ that has been is no more."

HORATIUS BONAR, D.D.

"Fresh confidence the speculatist takes
From every hair-brained proselyte he makes,
And therefore prints—himself but half deceived—
Till others have the soothing tale believed :
Hence comment after comment, spun as fine
As bloated spiders draw the flimsy line."

COWPER.

"To the law and to the testimony : if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."—ISA. viii. 20.

IX.

"MR. NORTH," said the late erudite and distinguished divine, Professor Duncan of Edinburgh, one day, in the house of Dr. Moody-Stuart, "you are an untrained theologue." "Very untrained," was the reply. "You mistake me, sir," was Dr. Duncan's rejoinder; "I laid the emphasis not on 'untrained,' but on 'theologue.'" He sometimes spoke of Mr. North, whose addresses he often listened to with the humility of a little child, as a "born theologian." The celebrated Dr. Cook, of the Irish Presbyterian Church, gave a similar testimony to that of the Free Church Professor, saying to a number of his ministerial brethren who had been listening to Mr. North, that "he was one of the best theologians among them all, and that his preaching of Christ for Christ's own sake, accompanied by the Spirit's power, led those who hung upon his lips to open their whole hearts for a whole Christ." To give one more testimony of a different sort, we may mention that Mr. A. Jenkinson, who has for twenty years undertaken with so much acceptance the responsible charge of the Sabbath evening meetings in the Free Church Assembly Hall in Edinburgh, remarked one

day, after having secured Mr. North's services, "Now my mind is at rest for a week. Mr. North is the only lay-preacher who has preached in this Hall, whom no one has ever come to me to object to, on the ground of some real or supposed mis-statement of doctrine."

We have narrated his conversion, the marvellous success of his ministry, and the influence it has had on our country, and we naturally enquire next, What was the cause of this success? Some will say, it was because he was a layman; but though he started alone as a lay-preacher, he was followed by multitudes of others, none of whom achieved anything like his success, except Mr. D. L. Moody. Others have said, it was curiosity that drew such crowds to see one who had been known as a man of the world, living a fast life, now standing up as a preacher of the gospel. This might have drawn crowds for the first year, or at most two; but it cannot account for the fact, that to the end of his life, through twenty years of labour, the audiences that flocked to listen to him were limited only by the capacity of the church or hall in which he was advertised to preach.

The great secret of his success, coupled with the fact that he possessed natural eloquence, and subject to the sovereignty of the Divine Spirit, who uses whom He will, undoubtedly lay in his doctrine commending itself to the intellects and hearts of men. For Brownlow North was a great doctrinal preacher. He was eloquent, but his eloquence consisted in the

clear, powerful, and earnest statement, exposition, and application of great doctrines. He had not the thrilling pictorial power of Dr. Thomas Guthrie, the marvellous fecundity of illustration and the musical voice of Charles Spurgeon, the telling command of simile and analogy of William Arnot, or the exhaustless fund of anecdote of D. L. Moody. With Brownlow North doctrine was everything. His style is terse and plain, but unadorned. He had no rounded periods, no graceful similes, no oratorical peroration. Often voice and words both failed him in the climax of his most earnest appeals. His power lay in the solemn and forcible statement of his doctrines, in his convincing proof, and in his thrilling application of them. And what is remarkable is that he derived his theology mainly for himself from a study of the Holy Scriptures. He drew it from no schoolmen, creeds, or confessions. He preached therefore, not in the technical terminology of divines, but in the language of Scripture and of ordinary every-day life.

If the physician finds it desirable, after the antidote to the small-pox virus has passed through a number of human systems, to replenish it from its original source, it is as desirable for the physician of souls to rectify his antidote to the poison of sin, after it has passed through many human systems, by drawing it afresh from the fountain-head. If the mariner finds it needful from time to time to correct the results of his dead-reckoning by direct observations of the heavens,

it is as needful for those who navigate the bark of the Church through the angry and treacherous seas of life to correct the dead-reckoning of their log-books by new observations of the sure words of prophecy, the heaven-hung lights that shine in the firmament of our night. It will satisfy some, and provoke others, to find that the result of this fresh set of careful and prayerful observations, made by a hard logical head and a clear eye, is almost an exact photograph of what is known as the theology of the Reformation.

In preaching, Mr. North very much confined himself to the leading landmarks of theology. Although he had a competent knowledge of Greek, and occasionally refers in his annotated Bible to the original reading, his mind was of a dogmatic rather than critical cast, and he commonly studied the Bible in English; he seized and preached the leading aspects of each doctrine rather than those that were subordinate, and avoided the handling of secondary points as being more suitable to the pastor than the evangelist.

His preaching gave a fresh impetus and influence to old truth in our churches. One of our theological professors has remarked that there was a wave of divinity students who came under the spiritual power of Mr. North's teaching, were impressed by it at the time, and bore the impress afterwards. Let us examine what this teaching was. It can be summarised under a few leading heads, which were his favourite and characteristic topics.

I. "*GOD IS.*"

THE EXISTENCE, PERSONALITY, AND PRESENCE OF GOD.

"It is a blessed thing that we are not placed amid the grinding and wheeling of a great machine of a universe without guiding hand or animating heart. There is a God, there is a God; Jehovah, He is the God; Jehovah, He is the God."—Rev. John Duncan, LL.D., D.D.

"What is his name? and God said (unto Moses), I am that I am."—Exod. iii. 13, 14.

"La question de Dieu manque d'actualité," * was the remark of the editor of a leading French publication, when an article was offered him by Paul Leroux, on "God." Brownlow North invested the question of God's existence with the most intense actuality. This grand essential truth he made the foundation of all his discourses. In the prominence which he gave to it, his preaching differed as much from the ordinary run of preaching, as the vividness with which he presented it differs from the mode of its presentation in most discourses and treatises on this subject.

In his hands the truth of God's existence became a tremendous and burning reality, borne in upon the convictions and consciousness of his hearers with terrific force. With him the being of God was no

* *i.e.* "The subject of 'God' is lacking in the element of reality."

problem, no *quod erat demonstrandum*, satisfactorily proved by the ordinary chain of evidence, but not unfrequently leaving the mind that has acquiesced in the inevitable conclusion as far from this God, of whose existence it is logically convinced, as it was when it stood in doubt of it. When once the hearer was convinced of the existence of God, he pressed upon him the fact that that existence involved most momentous consequences to himself; that it was a personal God of whose existence the soul was convinced, even the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; the God by whom is begotten the eternal and Divine Son, and from whom proceeds the eternal and Divine Spirit; a God therefore who is no abstraction, no mere conception of the intellect, but a living and most august Person; the God who formed us for His own glory, who has the most indisputable claims upon our reverence, worship, service and love; the God against whom we have sinned, who is to be our Judge at the last day, and is our Judge even to-day; the God with whom we, one and all of us, have to do.

The God whose existence he thus felt himself called upon to preach was not presented as the God of the man of science, the Great First Cause, or the God of the student of Philosophy, the great subject of speculation and of contemplation; but as the God of the Bible, the God whom the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles served, the God of the spirits of all flesh, who, as his own God, claims the obedience of each

man, and the God whose claim to be his God the rebellious sinner is daily rejecting; a God who is a Person, the Hearer of prayer, possessed of freewill, love, and other personal attributes.

In his last published work he writes: "I believe there are numbers of what are called learned and deep-thinking people, who profess to believe in God, and who would be troubled in their minds if they thought they were not honouring God, whose God in reality is no better than an idol of their own creation.* They believe the revelations of their own intellect, rather than the revelations of Scripture; and while they acknowledge a God of the universe, a God of nature, a God of creation, and other lords many and gods many, they know nothing of the only living and true God, the God of the Bible." ("Christ the Saviour and Christ the Judge.") His teaching was that the God of nature is the God of Revelation also. *God is,* were two words which he used to announce with most solemn emphasis in his oral addresses, and which he not unfrequently prints in capital letters in his published works. They formed the basis of all his preaching, the foundation of all his theology, and that, not in the way of a postulate taken for granted by the preacher, but as the first great doctrine which the human heart naturally was prone to call in question, which required to be intelligently believed by every true

* This accords with a leading thought of Dr. Thomas Chalmers.

and acceptable worshipper, and not only believed, but realized.

The evidence on which he mainly rested this truth was the internal evidence, that the mind of man craves for a god, and is so constituted that it cannot do without a god of some kind; that we have an inborn, intuitive consciousness of the existence of an almighty, all-wise, omnipresent, and altogether holy God; that our conscience tells us of a God who is a righteous Lawgiver and Judge; that the God revealed in the Bible exactly meets these cravings and intuitions, and this testimony of our nature; that His words appeal to our hearts as the voice of the great God; that the blindness which leads many men to doubt or deny His existence is engendered by sin, and is both a willing and a sinful ignorance,—a darkness loved by the blind man. That this is the true source of the ignorance and doubt of a very large number of professed sceptics, is shown by the fact that more of this class are brought to the acknowledging of God through the awakening of their conscience, and conviction of sin wrought within them by the Holy Spirit, than by any course of argument however ably conducted. In the fourteenth Psalm, which Mr. North was continually quoting, the fool's denial of the existence of God is shown to be connected more closely with his moral than his mental obliquity. God's existence is a beautiful and indisputable corollary from man's sense of guilt.

The fact that Brownlow North gave such promi-

nence in his preaching to this doctrine, may be naturally traced to his own spiritual experience at the time of his conversion, which we have already narrated. The intensity and protracted character of the temptation to embrace atheism as a refuge from conviction and alarm were singular, but the temptation itself is by no means uncommon, and, alas, in many cases not unsuccessful; and other eminent men of God there have been who have gone through as deep and painful a spiritual conflict on this very doctrine. Especially has this been the case with those who were being fitted by the Divine Spirit for awakening others, or for dealing with other awakened consciences. Dr. John Duncan, of Edinburgh, went through a similar experience. Dr. Duncan had indeed gone further than Mr. North, having for a period embraced speculative atheism. He said to Dr. Moody Stuart, "I first saw clearly the existence of God in walking along the bridge at Aberdeen: it was a great discovery to me: I stopped, and stood in an ecstasy of joy at seeing the existence of God:" he also added, "I stood and thanked God for His existence." And to another friend he said, "When I was convinced that there was a God, I danced upon the Brig o' Dee with delight, though I had a fear that He would damn me."

Mr. North regarded atheism as the capital sin, and brought the charge of it home with convincing power to many hearts which had been in the habit of considering themselves very far removed from it. He

showed the man who took for granted God's existence and imagined he assented to it, that he was really denying it, unless his intellectual assent to the doctrine carried with it the practical consequences of submission and obedience to that God in whom he professed to believe. Few who heard his striking appeals can, even after the lapse of twenty years, forget the impressiveness with which he depicted the "folly" of the atheist, whether he belonged to the speculative or the practical class, showing that he was a "fool" in God's sight to-day, and would one day be exposed as a "fool" in the sight of the whole universe, whatever his reputed wisdom or acquired human knowledge might be.

The fact that a preacher who had the ear of Scotland as no other had it at the time, having access to churches of almost all denominations, having the power of attracting crowded audiences wherever he went, moving from town to town and district to district, and awakening the interest and attention of almost every class of society in these districts, should have been led to press so powerfully upon the multitudes whom his voice reached, the existence of a Personal God, was surely a providential preparation of large numbers of the Scottish people for withstanding those assaults upon this fundamental doctrine, both covert and avowed, which were made by sceptics, materialists, and positivists during the later years of this evangelist's work, and are likely to be made for years to come still more persistently by many of our

leading literary and scientific men. This doctrine stands on the forefront of the Decalogue, and the histories of the ethical systems of the world from which it is absent prove, by their very failure, that it is the necessary basis both of religion and morality.

The Materialism or Nature-worship of our leaders of science of to-day appears to be a return to the earliest and one of the subtlest forms of heathenism, viz., the Baal-worship which arose soon after the Deluge, and spread from Assyria well-nigh throughout the whole human race, consisting in a worship of law, light, and life. The earliest and the latest religion of man's unaided intellect are essentially the same, almost the only difference being that it is taught to-day in university class-rooms and public lecture halls, in place of temples, high places, and stone circles; and should it, by allying itself with Rome, become once again a religion as well as a philosophy, the worship of the creature will, through Christendom, be once more substituted for that of the Creator, who is over all, God blessed for ever.*

Of this scientific Pantheism Mr. North says, "If a man elects to place his hope of salvation on the doctrines of research or science, on the teaching of his own or any other human wisdom, and refuses to receive the Bible in the spirit of a little child, he must stand or fall by his own election, but let such a man

* We must remember that at an early period it inoculated the Christian Church with priestly celibacy and tonsure, altar-lights, and probably also virgin-worship, and the sunward position in devotion.

remember, if the Bible is true he is lost. A God who did not so love the world as to give His only begotten Son to be a propitiation for man's sins, is a God that has no more existence than 'Ashtoreth the abomination of the Sidonians,' or 'Melcom the abomination of the children of Ammon.'" This baneful teaching is now being spread by the public press, in Books, Reviews, Magazines, and Newspapers, in the most subtle disguise, through the length and breadth of our land; but while the faith of many will falter, and of many fail, there are multitudes who were so forewarned and forearmed against the ensnaring nature of this delusion by him whose labours are the subject of this sketch,—who were by this wise master-builder grounded, stablished, and settled in this truth in such wise that the sleight and cunning craftiness of men cannot shake their belief in the central truth that "GOD LIVES."

This is not written to glorify man, but to magnify the Spirit, who called him to this work, and taught and fitted him for it. In the clear exposition and urgent pressing of the way of salvation for the sinner in Jesus Christ, he did not differ from the other lay evangelists who succeeded him, although he was their leader and to a certain extent moulded their preaching on those points, but in preaching the doctrine of the Divine existence he stood alone.

It is due to the reader no less than to the subject of this memoir to give extracts from Mr. North's teaching on this all-important doctrine in his own

words. He writes: "I believe there is nothing more necessary to salvation in the whole Scripture than the reception of this name of God, I AM. So important do I feel it to be, that I think I have alluded to it in every little tract that I have written, and very, very often in my sermons and addresses. Whenever God has a purpose of mercy either to an individual or to a nation, His first teaching is, I AM. Surely then I cannot do wrong in making it my first teaching.

God is about to deliver the children of Israel out of their bondage, and the lesson that He tells the minister by whose hand He will deliver them is, "Say unto the children of Israel, I AM. Do not tell them at present to lay hold of any of my attributes; do not call their attention to my power or my mercy, to my justice or my holiness; but set them as the first thing they have to do to grapple with this one great truth, I AM. The natural eye cannot see me; the natural ear cannot hear me; the natural heart cannot receive me; but for all that, say unto the children of Israel, I AM, and tell them to believe it."*

In a sermon preached at Elgin in Nov. 1862, from the text, "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. iv. 18), he said, "How can you believe even in the very existence of God, if you cannot believe in Him as a hearing God and a seeing God? The Bible tells us that the just shall live by faith, that faith is a con-

* From "Ourselves." Hunt and Co.

dition of salvation. Believe in God. In the eleventh of Hebrews, at the sixth verse, we have the definition given us of the smallest degree of faith with which it is possible to please God. I believe that that verse is the *first verse* in the whole Bible that a man or woman requires to get into the heart. Till you have got the substance of that verse into your hearts you are without saving religion in the sight of God. 'He that cometh to God must believe that *He is.*' Now if I could give you this, if I could give to every one in this large congregation a practical belief that GOD IS, that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is really a God that sees us, and hears us, and will save us if we come to Him, I would be glad to shut this Bible and go home and bless God for it to all eternity; for I believe this is the grain of mustard seed which will grow into the great tree in the end."

"It is not more true that every man by nature is born a fool, than that by nature he is born an infidel, an unbeliever in the very existence of the God of the Bible."

The real and immediate Presence of God with the true worshipper, was a truth which Mr. North was in the habit uniformly, in almost all his discourses and published works, of building upon the solid foundation which he had laid in the doctrine we have examined. It is in itself a direct corollary from the truth of the Divine Existence—God is, therefore God is here beside me, and hears me,—omnipresence being one of the necessary attributes of the Divine Being. His

favourite text, Heb. xi. 6, brackets the two truths as necessary to be believed in by every accepted worshipper. No ministering priest of old could have appeared to realize more vividly the immediate presence of the great unseen God, hid from him only by the thin veil of sense that obstructed his bodily vision of the most Holy, but could not obstruct the vision of faith penetrating within the veil. His sense of the Divine Presence was so manifest, not only in his discourse, but in the solemn awe of his eye, his gestures, and his whole bearing, that even one who had entered the house of God in a light spirit was often constrained to exclaim, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not;" he felt sisted in the presence-chamber of the King of kings. Those who left the place of worship unimpressed with the sense of God's immediate presence, could not possibly leave it without the persuasion that the preacher at least was possessed by this belief, or delusion if such it were, and were constrained to acknowledge that others were dealing, or imagined they were dealing, not only with abstract doctrine, but with a real and most august Person unperceived by the outward eye, or even by the eye of reason.

It was no pantheistical presence that he preached, but a personal presence, the presence of a personal Saviour as well as a personal Creator. A text which he loved, because it had brought much comfort to his own heart, was, "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him,-to all that call upon

Him in truth." The inquirer is greatly helped by discovering that the Saviour is as near to him as He was to Nicodemus in the private midnight room, or to the woman of Sychar by the deserted mid-day well; that he can talk with Christ, and settle the great transaction of his soul's eternal salvation, without the intervention of any priest or ordinance to bring near a distant God. Christ is the only person between us and the Father, and He is not a wall excluding us, but a door admitting us to His presence.

This belief in the Divine Omnipresence may be compelled by logical argument, but it is by faith alone, and under the teaching of the Word and Spirit, that it becomes a saving truth. This was what Mr. North taught. The worshipper did not feel that he needed any assistance from sense, such as is given by the Church of Rome in her crosses and crucifixes, her pictures, shrines, and altars, to aid him in concentrating his attention, to depict to himself the unseen, and to excite his devotional feelings; or any such irrational dogma as that of transubstantiation, to bring near to man's sense a God who has been already apprehended as very near to his faith. Should such sensuous aids be permitted to creep once more into our worship, whether as objects of worship or as mere accessories, we shall be reconstructing what we destroyed at the Reformation, and can only look for a return of the Dark Ages. God is a Spirit, not material: His presence is spiritual, and must be spiritually apprehended, and

felt to be so real and immediate, that no human contrivance can possibly bring it nearer. May we seek to gain this apprehension of the Lord's presence, and to retain it when it is gained!

It may be well to give one or two extracts from Mr. North's teaching on this subject in his own words. "I feel the belief in the personality and real, though invisible, presence of God to be essential to the existence of true religion in the soul."

"Was it not the knowledge of the presence of the great I AM that was the sustaining power of the man Christ Jesus? So St. Peter interprets Ps. xvi. 8, in Acts ii. 25, 'I foresaw the Lord alway before my face; for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved.' Never for one moment, except in that awful hour when the agonizing cry was wrung from Him, 'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?' did our blessed Saviour lose sight of His heavenly Father." ("Ourselves," pp. 30, 31.)

Speaking of the period of his conversion, he says he was led to the conviction that God had seen him during his long course of sin, and therefore saw him now when he was on his knees before Him. "I took the answer to my prayer from what He said who was in the room with me. My burden fell off and I rejoiced in a pardon according to the word of the Lord."

"No man can really be said to believe that 'God is,' who does not believe that He is present when he prays to Him, and hears and sees him." "Are you

as sure that God hears and knows what you say to Him in prayer, as you would be if you had spoken to a fellow-creature?" "God always is present with us. To realize this, to believe it, and to act as if it were a truth, is what we should seek after before all things. That it is so, is our only safety. 'In Thy presence is fulness of joy.' This is simple truth. Let us ask ourselves if we would and do feel it joy to be in the Lord's presence. To many the very idea of being in God's presence is horror of horrors. This is because they are unconverted. Never rest till you are enabled to desire God's presence, and to rejoice in it."

II. "*IT IS WRITTEN.*"

THE INSPIRATION AND DIVINE AUTHORITY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

"It is true that the Scriptures are very properly declared to be not the revelation itself, but the record of it: but it is only through the record that the revelation can be obtained, at least by Protestants; and any tamperings with the record are operations upon the revelation itself."—HARRIET MARTINEAU (*Autobiography*).

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."—2 TIM. iii. 16.

BROWNLOW NORTH had an intense veneration and love for the Bible, as the word of the living God. It was inwoven with his whole spiritual experience. From that day in Elgin, when striking his hand upon his open Bible, as his eye rested on the text Rom. iii. 22, he exclaimed, starting to his feet, "If that scripture is true I am a saved man," till the day twenty years afterwards, when on his dying bed in the house of a stranger he turned to a young officer, and said, with his fast ebbing breath, "You are young, in good health, and with the prospect of rising in the army: I am dying; but if the Bible is true, and I know it is, I would not change places with you for the whole world," that Bible was the daily food of his soul, his lamp in the night, his teacher, his counsellor, his trust, and his treasure. Never for an hour did he swerve from his childlike faith in these Scriptures of truth,

or from his manly allegiance to all the doctrines, precepts, and promises of the Divine Word. And he spent his whole time, talents, and toil in preaching to the people, wherever they would come to listen, all the words of this life.

No listless listener could see him open the sacred volume, and hear him read even the introductory psalm of the service, without being sensible that the preacher was thoroughly convinced that this volume was indeed the very word proceeding out of the mouth of God, and was of Divine origin from its beginning to its close. And the impression made upon the hearer by his opening and reading of the Bible was not effaced, but was steadily increased, by his handling and expounding of it throughout his whole discourse. So far was there from ever being any lightness in his handling of the Scripture, that many times in every service the sense that he was reading and preaching the living word of the living God seemed to be almost overpowering. No high priest in the Holy Place could have handled the Urim and Thummim with greater awe and reverence than this preacher handled the Divine oracles. He believed that the word of God was the sword of the Spirit; and the very remarkable effects upon the consciences, understandings, and lives of men, wrought through him by this instrument, fully bore out his belief. With many others, he could say "experto crede;" and the argument from experience and experiment, which is now appealed to as the surest test in many

of the sciences, must be allowed its rightful place in the science of theology.

He did not go into questions of biblical criticism, nor enter the arena of controversy regarding points that are classed under the technical term of "Introduction" to the study of the doctrines of Scripture; his calling as an evangelist did not entitle him, and his training and cast of mind did not fit him for this field. His strong common-sense, clear logical head, and firm grasp of the Calvinistic system of theology, all led him to allow its due place to the human element in the written Word; but these very qualities, combined with the childlike, and yet giant-like faith with which he leaned his soul, and rested his eternity upon the revelation of God, led him to give still greater prominence to the Divine element in that Word. With him the human authorship was the shell, the Divine authorship the kernel. There lay the germ of life. The botanist or the artist may study the seed-vessel, with its relative perfections or imperfections, but the husbandman thinks mainly of the seed on which his whole hope of harvest hangs.

The title, "the Word of God," was to him no empty phrase, no euphemism for the "word of good men," as it is with many. It meant simply what it expresses, that it is the utterance of the mind and will of God. He never looked upon the Bible as containing the words of God hid among the words of His servants, nor preached that Word as one who was searching for grains of Divine truth buried in the sands of human

opinion, or for nuggets of gold hid in mounds of ore. He preached the Word as precious gold already examined, tested, and guaranteed by its Author. His creed was the creed of Protestantism, yea, of that more ancient Hebrew Church, which sang—

> "The words of God are words most pure,
> They be like silver tried
> In earthen furnace, seven times
> That hath been purified."
>
> PSALM xii. 6. (Scotch version.)

He riveted every argument with, "*It is written;*" he barbed every arrow of appeal with, "*What saith the Scripture?*" and ever seemed to tremble lest he should be found diminishing aught from that Word, or adding aught to it.

Regarding Scripture from the Reformers' point of view, as a full Divine revelation of the rule of faith and duty, and an inspired record of the history of God's dealings with our race, and declining to discuss debateable details, he placed it in a position of absolute and infallible supremacy; and though his mind was not of a poetical cast, he loved, according to the use and wont of the Scottish pulpit, to spiritualise the histories of the Old Testament. Attacks upon the inspiration of the Scripture had begun even at the commencement of his ministry, but it was only towards its close that the Church became so painfully familiar with them. Of those views which subvert the full divinity of the Word he had the greatest horror, and once in a public address in Edinburgh he

stated that before coming to town he had conducted a large Bible-class for a popular and esteemed minister, and had been both grieved and alarmed by the views of inspiration which were expressed by the young men attending it.

A military officer writes thus, and his experience was that of multitudes: "Brownlow North was of great service to me in leading me to pay particular attention to each verse of Scripture, and to take more notice of the meaning of each word in it. He was most helpful to me *on* the Word, though not the first to point me to it." He taught the doctrine of inspiration not scholastically or controversially, but dogmatically and experimentally, and as a question of life and death to the individual rather than to the Church. The former, however, includes the latter.

While not claiming for him any originality in his teaching on this point, we must recognise his claim (along with that of the other lay preachers who followed him) to the gratitude of the Church of Christ in this land, for his clear, bold, and unwearied proclamation and enforcing of the grand foundation truth of living Protestantism, viz., the full divinity of the Holy Scriptures, and consequently their supreme authority as the only ground of faith, rule of life, and judge of religious controversies, in opposition to all human tribunals whether of tradition and Church authority, as set up by Romanism, or of human reason as set up by Rationalism. In the face of

current tendencies in religious as well as in worldly circles such teaching was of the last importance.

Men and women who were led, after they came to years of understanding, to rest their hopes for eternity on the revelation of God as thoroughly divine, and *on nothing else whatever*, will not be lightly induced to abandon what they like their fathers have found to be a Rock unshaken, and that cannot be shaken, for the quagmire of Church authority and tradition, or the quicksands of current opinion.

The popular hymns that have so multiplied in recent years have done inestimable service to the cause of Christ and His kingdom in our land, by their presenting to the mind the leading truths of grace, set in a very clear and attractive light; but in these hymns there is one defect in which they present a contrast to the inspired Psalms, viz., the omission of adoring thanksgiving not only for the gift of the Son and the Spirit, but for the revealed Word.

Thus while fortifying the people of our land against direct assaults upon the leading doctrines of the faith, they left the citadel, and key of all, uncelebrated in song, and unguarded by the eye and heart of intelligent faith and ardent love. The enemy has not been slow to perceive the undefended position, nor slow to estimate it at its true worth, knowing that if it were captured he was master of the situation. Surely, then, we owe a great debt of gratitude to this soldier of the cross, who alike in all his addresses and pub-

lications, whether tracts or treatises, set himself to rally the people to this fortress, and bade them hold it as for their life, recalling them to the standpoint of the Reformation. He was no poet, but his words were winged words notwithstanding, and he could supply the unhappy gap in our sacred songs, by songs more ancient, and divine, as he gave out to be sung such words as these:—

"God's law is perfect, and converts
The soul in sin that lies,
God's testimony is most sure,
And makes the simple wise.

"The statutes of the Lord are right,
And do rejoice the heart,
The Lord's command is pure, and doth
Light to the eyes impart.

"They more than gold, yea, much fine gold,
To be desired are,
Than honey, honey from the comb
That droppeth, sweeter far."

PSALM xix. 7-10. (Scotch version.)

We have only space further to note on this great doctrine that Mr. North always regarded the written Word not only in an historical light, but as containing the direct answer of a present God to our petitions. The order of his teaching was, God is,—God is a person,—God is present,—God has spoken,—or rather God speaks, in the revelation He has given us. His position was, that a silent God is a God unrevealed, that a God unrevealed is a God unknown, and he shrank from such a thought with all the intensity of his nature, as did the Psalmist of old when he cried,

"Be not silent unto me, O God; lest, if Thou be silent unto me, I become like them that go down into the pit" (Psalm xxviii. 1). He emphatically taught that the answer to prayer is to be sought, not in any mystical internal idea or feeling, any more than in any external sign, but in the written Word, as well as in the works of providence and grace. This Word is instinct with life, and comes to us as if newly uttered by the mouth of God.

If any other ever earned the title of "the man of the book," assuredly this man did. He spent hours every day in hard and prayerful study of its pages. To anxious inquirers his undeviating counsel was, "Go home and read your Bible." His farewell words before his last illness to an intimate friend were, "Dear ——, there's nothing for any of us but the Bible." The words written of another were eminently true of him, "*To him the Bible was alone and altogether the book.*" It was his constant companion and counsellor, his study all the day, and to a large extent his library. One of the favourite resting-places of his soul was the testimony, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

III. "*YOU ARE IMMORTAL.*"

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL AND THE ETERNAL DURATION OF SPIRITUAL LIFE AND DEATH,

"My own brief life should teach me this,
That life shall live for evermore,
Else earth is darkness at the core,
And dust and ashes all that is."

TENNYSON.

"Shall these poor elements outlive
The mind whose kingly will they wrought?
Their gross unconsciousness survive
The godlike energy of thought?"

WHITTIER.

"We are also God's offspring."—ARATUS OF CILICIA AND ST. PAUL. (Acts xvii. 28.)

THE first tract which (so far as we can recollect) Mr. North published, bore the title "*You are Immortal.*" It has often been reprinted since. It opens with these words, "Reader, you are an immortal being. You have been born, and you will have to leave this world, but you can never cease to exist. You *must* live for ever! It is of no avail to you that you are so debased by sin that you would wish to be like the brutes that perish. . . . I know that all this may seem very dreamy and unreal to you, but it is nevertheless true." The immortality of the human soul, and its endless existence in a state of holiness and blessedness, or of corruption and misery, were statements which were constantly upon his lips.

Many an audience has been startled and riveted by his saying sharply, "I can tell you to a minute how long your life is to be: it is to be as long as the life of God." He did not bring forward these old truths and commonplaces of religion, these great facts found in the revealed Word concerning the duration and the destiny of men, to meet the views of materialists and annihilationists, but to awaken to a sense of the powers of the world to come those who were lying on the lap of carnal pleasure, lulled asleep by the world's syren song; to arouse prodigals, poor or rich, feeding upon the husks of the swine-trough, forgetful alike of their origin and their destiny, to a sense of the dignity of their nature which they were debasing by indulgence in vice; and to arrest men immersed in the business and the cares of this life, absorbed wholly in its enterprises and its gains, by the view of that future state of existence into which they must ere long enter, and for which they were making no preparation. Such men, if they are to be changed in their habits and pursuits, converted to God, and led to live for God and eternity, and not for self and time, must be brought to realize that they are immortal beings.

Brownlow North with marvellous vividness and dramatic power, as well as with the most intense solemnity and earnestness, used to open up before the crowded audiences, whom he was called on from the very beginning of his ministry to address, the vista of their eternal existence. One might have

heard a pin fall on the floor, or the rustle of a ribbon on a thoughtless head, as these immense crowds, thronging aisles, passages, and pulpit-stairs, hung on the preacher's lips as if afraid to draw their breath, drinking in the message with eyes as well as ears, while he told them that they were endowed with immortality, and in his own favourite phrase, "could no more go out of existence than God could."

Such plain statements, supported by well-known Scripture texts, were blessed to produce saving impression upon many souls, by awakening them out of the torpor of spiritual death. This truth, like that of the existence of God, is not only one of the foundation-stones of the Christian religion, but, at least in the form of belief in a future spiritual state, and apart from the distinctively scriptural doctrine of the resurrection of the body, has held the same fundamental position in every system which has prevailed to any extent in the world, and which has had any claim to be recognised as a religion containing even some broken fragments of truth that proclaim their Divine origin. Yet this heritage of our race is now attacked by the materialistic physicists and speculative philosophers of our day; and we see the thoughtless sensualist and the sordid seeker of gain joined and abetted in their practical denial of the soul's immortality by the pale student from his museum, who has anatomised the body of man, and studied his nervous organization, till he forgets that besides his corporeal he has a spiritual existence which his scalpel

and galvanic battery can neither touch nor test. He too says, "To-morrow man will die;" and, alas! this theory, which is utterly subversive of the Christian faith, is even advocated by some apparently earnest ministers of religion.

This annihilationist theory is much more prevalent, and even fashionable, now than when Mr. North began his preaching; but at so early a period as the spring of 1859 a gentleman who had adopted these views wrote to him from Paisley, objecting to his constant and dogmatic statements that the human soul is immortal. His letter, which is a long one, filling two very closely written sheets, argues in terms that are gentlemanly and courteous, but very decided, against Mr. North's position that man, as his objector fairly states it, "possesses a part that cannot die, nor be put to death." Thus Mr. North was quite aware that there was a then nascent error to which his teaching was diametrically opposed, and that his preaching was more offensive to the supporters of this tenet than that of most ministers, who, while firmly believing in the soul's immortality, did not give it the same prominence in their preaching. "The second death," Mr. North writes, "is something different from annihilation:" and in his annotated Bible he repeatedly states his belief that it consists in being forsaken by God—the death which, as he held, Adam died on the day that he fell—and the death which the eternal Son of God endured on Calvary, when He cried, "My God, my God, why

hast Thou forsaken me?" The theory that the death of the soul is annihilation thus struck at Mr. North's view of the Atonement, viz., that Christ saves sinners by suffering their death, while certainly His human nature was not annihilated.

The lines of argument which Mr. North took in defending what he preached on this subject were two. The first was that the Creator had communicated to man at his origin a nature similar to His own, and which therefore was endowed with immortality as one of its natural and inalienable properties. So both heathen and Christian teachers have reasoned, "We are the offspring of God" (Acts xvii. 28); and no theorists of evolution have a right to dictate to the believer as to the origin, and therefore the destiny, of that mysterious spirit by which we are allied much more closely to the God who tells us He breathed it into our bodily frame, than by that frame we are allied to the animal creation. His second argument was, that nothing will satisfy the desires and cravings of a man's spirit but having the eternal God as his portion: therefore we draw the conclusion that a man who craves for an eternal satisfaction must be himself eternal in his nature. Still his main proof was the teaching of God's Word. He says, "It is from the Bible we learn that we are immortal, and only from the Bible that we learn how to escape an immortality of evil and inherit an immortality of glory."

But Mr. North's teaching was opposed not only to the views propagated by the annihilationist, but to

those held and taught by the believers in the theory of universal final restoration; and by this latter class his teaching was bitterly attacked, even in the columns of some of the most widely circulated religious periodicals. In one of his letters to Lord Kintore he says, "The ——, a paper advocating the non-eternity of punishment, has published a long notice abusing me."

The line of proof he adopted on this subject was the direct and infallible testimony of Scripture, which he used, not only to prove the naked immortality of the soul of man, but in support of his teaching, in accord with that of the Church in all ages, that while some have the blessed reward of everlasting life, others receive the woful doom of everlasting death. This truth is a very awful and mysterious one, never to be handled by any without the greatest awe and tenderness; and in dealing with it those who are teachers and stewards of the mysteries should also surely see that they keep most scrupulously, in all their statements, within the limits and the expressions of the written Word. It may be that there is not always due care taken that our preaching, both in its terms and in its application to those to whom pertains this awful future, does not transgress the limits of inspiration, and that it is handled with the tenderness of those who have drunk into the spirit of the Eternal Son, who first clearly revealed an eternity of sin and sorrow, as well as an eternity of holiness and joy. We have been told by a Christian lady, an intimate friend of the late Principal Candlish, that on

one occasion she observed his eyes filled with tears when conversing with her on this very awful subject, and the current views on it.

In the margin of his New Testament, opposite Matt. xxv. 46, the words of which are "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal," Mr. North notes, "The duration of the punishment of the wicked and the life of the righteous are equal." This fact, that the same word is employed in these two clauses, should be enough to satisfy most persons of fair and unprejudiced judgment. The word is *'αιώνιος*, and any objection taken to its meaning "everlasting" on the ground of its etymology cannot invalidate Mr. North's common-sense argument, when we consider that the philosophical Greeks and Romans certainly had an idea of eternity, and both used this word to express it. Those who are inclined to criticise Mr. North's doctrine on this subject should remember also that he was not writing a speculative treatise regarding the destiny of such exceptional classes or cases as have not had the full means of grace; but that he was preaching to those who were daily rejecting the Saviour, and resisting the Holy Spirit, (on which sins he laid the greatest emphasis in all his preaching), and who by so doing were in imminent danger of sealing themselves up in final impenitence. Of the sin against the Holy Ghost our Lord says (Matt. xii. 32) that "it shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come;" while the Holy Spirit

says in Heb. vi. 4—6, that it is impossible to renew such sinners to repentance, on grounds that are independent of the lapse of time. This is assuredly "sin unto death."

The awakened soul has very usually an instinctive fear that it may have been guilty of this sin which inevitably incurs eternal judgment, and this appears to be a true instinct and shrinking from it as from the brink of the bottomless pit. The time of its commission is not necessarily, or always, coincident with that of departure from this life. Our Lord speaks of it as sometimes, perhaps often, taking place previous to death, among those who have enjoyed the clear light of the gospel. This, and not the death of the body, is mentioned in Scripture as the termination of the day of grace.

> "There is a point, we know not when,
> A line, we know not where,
> That marks the boundary of men
> To glory or despair:
> To pass that limit is to die;"—

and it well becomes us to inquire with deep concern, with the experienced divine who wrote these solemn lines, the late Dr. Alexander of New York,

> "Oh where is that mysterious bourne
> By which our path is crost,
> Beyond which God Himself has sworn
> That he who goes is LOST?"

How a state of final and eternal impenitence and hatred of God can be anything but a state of final and eternal separation from God, and therefore

misery and death, the objectors to this scriptural truth have never shown.

Of this terrible state of irremediable impenitence Mr. North often spoke, and thus writes, "If we are willing to give up sin and to go to Christ, we cannot have committed this sin;" and again, "The man who has a good thought left is not left of God."

To the Edinburgh University students he said, "I believe that the sin against the Holy Ghost is grieving the Spirit once too often. No man who has a good thought in his heart, the least desire to go to God, let him be a hundred years of age, and his sins what they may be, has committed the unpardonable sin. But though I say that a man eighty or a hundred years old may turn to God, yet I believe there are people, (and who shall say how young the youngest is now in hell, or yet walking on this earth?) against whom God has sworn in His wrath that they shall never enter into His rest. 'Wherefore the Holy Ghost saith'—He puts His own name to it, and I think in a book written entirely by the Holy Ghost, this is an awful word, as if He would call particular attention to it—'To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.'"

BROWNLOW NORTH'S THEOLOGY AND PREACHING CONTINUED.

"He who receives
Light from above, from the fountain of light,
No other doctrine needs, though granted true.
But these are false, or little else but dreams,
Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm.
Alas, what can they teach, and not mislead,
Ignorant of themselves, of God much more,
And how the world began, and how man fell,
Degraded by himself, on grace depending?
Much of the soul they talk, but all awry,
And in themselves seek virtue, and to themselves
All glory arrogate, to God give none."

JOHN MILTON.

"Thus saith the Lord God, Woe unto the foolish prophets that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! And one built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar. Lo, when the wall is fallen, shall it not be said unto you, Where is the daubing wherewith ye have daubed it?"—EZEK. xiii. 3, 10, 12.

X.

IV. *"BORN AGAIN."*

THE NECESSITY FOR THE SPIRIT'S WORK ON THE INTELLECT, AFFECTIONS, AND WILL.

"And is the soul indeed so lost (one cries),
Fallen from her glory, and too weak to rise?
Torpid and dull, beneath a frozen zone,
Has she no spark that she may call her own?
Grant her indebted to what zealots call
Grace undeserved, yet surely not for all."

COWPER.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."—JOHN iii. 6.

THE doctrines already reviewed as forming the sum and substance of Brownlow North's preaching are doctrines of the Church Catholic. Those which follow, and which, equally with the preceding, were mottoes on his banner and watchwords on his lips, belong more distinctively to the system of theology that is named Calvinistic, or Augustinian, or Pauline. Although their roots ramify through the whole of Revelation, they were first taught in connected form by the inspired Apostle Paul, were recovered from the oblivion and neglect of generations by the mighty sanctified genius of Augustine, and were once

more resuscitated from the tomb, in which for well-nigh a millennium of murky years they had lain buried, by the divinely guided and commanding intellects of Martin Luther and John Calvin. In the publication of these doctrines these two great reformers were supported by all their illustrious coadjutors in the Reformation. Their work is graven as with 'an iron pen and lead in a rock' in the symbolical books of the Reformed faith, and perpetuated with even greater exactness in the leading Confessions of the succeeding century. The master minds of the English Puritans adopted this system of doctrine with one consent.

It is also not unworthy of being noted that the vast majority of those servants of God who have been honoured by Him in producing revivals on a national scale, from the English Wycliffe and Bohemian Huss to those of the present, have been Augustinian or Calvinistic in their theological views. Thus a system which is by many reckoned narrow and unfitted to move the mass of mankind, however it may suit the logical reasonings of a divine closeted with dusty tomes, has not only had the support of the acutest intellects and most logical reasoners in the Church of Christ, but has stood the test of having moved multitudes and nations more thoroughly than any other system.

Brownlow North's teaching was in all points most pronouncedly Calvinistic. Indeed, so much was this the case that it seems marvellous that it obtained such very wide popularity; and perhaps in no country

except Scotland or America could one, laying so marked stress on such doctrines as human inability and the necessity of the Spirit's work, have acquired almost at once such general acceptance. May it not be to this characteristic of his preaching that the stability of those converted under his labours is under God in great part to be attributed ?

What makes the adhesion of Brownlow North to the leading doctrines of the so-called Calvinistic system a most valuable testimony to their truth, is not simply the fact that he was a man of a singularly clear judgment, and of very strong reasoning faculties, but still more the fact that he derived his views, not from the Confession of any Church, or the works of any theologian of however great repute, but mainly from a study of Scripture for himself, a study to which he devoted himself from the day of his conversion with the most unwearied and prayerful diligence.

His Calvinism did not in any way hamper him in declaring the freest offer of salvation to all, and pressing its instant acceptance upon every sinner to whom the offer came. The salvation he preached was as free as the sunlight, as authoritatively pressed on every gospel hearer as the august command of God can press it, and as urgent as it can be made by the exactest meaning of the word NOW. Sufficient for all, suitable for all, offered in gift to all, pressed upon the immediate acceptance of all by the invitation, the entreaty, and the command of God,

such was his gospel,—and can anything be more free, more full, and more unfettered? No doubt he also insisted on a natural aversion to it, inability to understand it, and incapacity to receive it. But over against this he held out an offer and gift of the Spirit as free as the offer and gift of the Saviour, thoroughly to overcome that aversion, to remove the blindness of the understanding and the alienation of the affections,—an omnipotent Spirit waiting to be bestowed on all who asked. Human language cannot express a salvation more overflowingly full and more unconditionally free: God offering His Spirit to lost and helpless sinners as freely and unconditionally as He offers His Son.

Mr. North was accustomed with great emphasis, and in no passing way, to dwell upon the fact that man's nature since the fall is utterly depraved and hopelessly corrupt, and that no works wrought in his unrenewed state can have any merit or proper holiness. Many will remember the frequency and solemnity with which he used to quote the fourteenth Psalm, ver. 1—3, "They are corrupt, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good." Another text which he used to employ as a proof of this doctrine was Heb. xi. 6, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." He showed that the unbeliever, being confessedly destitute of true faith, could not offer any truly acceptable worship or service to God, seeing the mainspring of a right relation to God was wanting. He writes: "Until

the new birth takes place, all our works, however apparently excellent in themselves, are *dead works*, unprofitable to us, dishonouring to God, and partake of the nature of sin. Such is the teaching of the Bible, such is the teaching of the Articles of the Church of England, and such is the teaching of holy men of all denominations, and has been in all ages" ("Ourselves"). Again from his Bible I quote, "We can do no acceptable work for God till we are saved." "All that the law can do for us is to show us that we have not kept it. Any who think they can keep it, and thus please God, know nothing of what God's law requires."

But Mr. North went further into this subject, and used to press the truth that as man cannot be saved by any moral goodness that may be supposed to remain in him, so neither can he be saved by the exercise of his own reason, which the numerous section in most of our churches which has embraced rationalistic views seems to think has escaped the sad ravages of the fall, which they acknowledge to have spread ruin over the rest of our nature.

That master theologian, John Bunyan, with his inimitable pictorial pen in his wonderful allegory of The Holy War, describes the very first ill deed of Diabolus, when he had gained entrance into Mansoul, as being the darkening of man's intellect. "My Lord Understanding," he tells us, "held the office of Lord Mayor of the town of Mansoul; but although he had complied in admitting Diabolus into the town, yet he

thought it not fit to let him abide in his former lustre and glory, because he was a seeing man. Wherefore he darkened him, not only by taking from him his office and power, but by building an high and strong tower just between the sun's reflection and the windows of my lord's palace; by which means his house, and all and the whole of his habitation, were made as dark as darkness itself. And thus being alienated from the light he became as one that was born blind."

John Bunyan taught in the pregnant poetry of his dream precisely what Brownlow North taught in the pointed prose of his discourses, a truth which is diametrically opposed to the views and teaching of modern rationalists, who make reason man's saviour, setting it now in place of revelation as the Divine Light, or again in place of faith as that by which we apprehend the truth of revelation, ignoring such plain statements of inspiration as that of 1 Cor. ii. 14: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Brownlow North was extremely jealous of that worship of human reason with which we are threatened in the present day to an extent never known before in our earth's history, and which is in direct opposition to the worship of the Divine Wisdom incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth;—the object of rationalists' worship being human reason in general, and that of

modern papists the supposed sanctified reason of a single man, who has now usurped the throne of the Divine Word and the office of the Divine Spirit.

On this subject the margins of his Bibles are often black with annotations such as these: "No man can ever know anything of God or of the things of God, unless they are revealed to him by God's Spirit. Pray for the Spirit. He is promised to all who ask." "If Paul had not received the Spirit of God, he could have known nothing." "Observe why Paul said that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge were hid in the Father and in Christ, lest any worldly-wise man should say there was knowledge anywhere else. There is no real wisdom or knowledge out of God and of Christ." "In the wisest ages of the world man's religion was the most absurd, yet even now are not the highly esteemed among men in too many instances as literally worshipping the work of their own hands as were the heathen?" "No man can know my secrets unless I am pleased to reveal them, so no man can know the things of God but by the teaching of the Holy Spirit." Man's reason has large and honourable functions, but while we render to reason the things that are reason's, may such teaching as this long prevail which bids us render to God the things that are God's!

Besides dwelling much on human helplessness and human ignorance, Mr. North always taught that the affections had been estranged and debased by the Fall, and that therefore the heart required to be

changed. The first commandment is to love the Lord with all the heart, and this man cannot do, because his heart is turned away from God, and loves the world and sin; for a heart unholy cannot love a holy God. He writes: "Even earthly wisdom might discover that unless a man was thoroughly changed, heaven could be no heaven to him. We must have a complete new set of affections and desires, a *new heart* in short, before we can enter into the kingdom of heaven." "When God has a purpose of mercy toward a man, He gives him a new heart. Every saved man and woman on the earth is a new creature, he has experienced the new birth, he has been born again of the Spirit, he has a new heart and a new nature, which produce new affections and new obedience, springing from new motives" ("Ourselves," p. 52). "The Old Testament is full of the necessity and the promise of the new birth."

But man's fallen state consists also in the determined opposition of his will to the will of God, which can only be removed by the Holy Spirit, who influences it by such appeals, motives, and arguments as are fitted to bring about the desired result. Our will must be brought into conformity with the will of God. Salvation is never forced upon an unwilling recipient, but each gospel hearer is called on to exercise his will in an act of choice, and choose for himself the Lord to be his God. But the alteration in our will is wrought by the will of God, as it is said, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of

Thy power" (Ps. cx. 3). Very powerfully did Mr. North press the duty of this willing choice upon his hearers. One of his most widely blessed discourses was a spiritualized exposition of Genesis xxiv. 28: "Wilt thou go with this man? and she said, I will go." As may be seen even from this volume, soul after soul in different parts of the country was brought to the point of decision, and of closing with Christ, through that sermon, in which he throws the whole responsibility of the choice upon the hearer; yet he states unambiguously at the very outset, that "by the power of the Holy Ghost" his hearers or readers may answer as Rebecca did. On John vi. 47, he notes: "If we are really going to Jesus, this verse assures us of two most comfortable things: one, that Jesus will in no wise, for no reason whatever, cast us out; the other, that we must be among the number given Him, or we would not have gone to Him." And again: "If Christ rejects a coming sinner, He must also reject a drawing Father." Again, on John viii. 43, 44: "'Ye cannot hear My words; for the lusts of your father ye will do;' the '*will*' explains the '*cannot*.' You cannot, because your will is in opposition."

Such was his teaching on these most important points, of which he could say, along with the Apostle of the Gentiles, that 'he neither received it of man, neither was taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ;' for he drew it fresh from the great fountain-head of truth contained in Holy Scripture.

Although the doctrine of the Divine sovereignty in predestinating and converting grace is rejected by dogmatic Arminianism, it is accepted very largely, both in their prayers and their praises, by the true children of God who profess that creed. There, where they are free from the war of words and the din of definitions, they agree with Calvinists in confessing utter weakness, sinfulness, and corruption before God, and in supplicating the sovereign grace of His own Spirit; and heart beats true to heart, even where eye does not see clear to eye in surveying the field of Divine truth. Dr. John Duncan, when a young man in lodgings in Aberdeen, had many a controversy with his landlady, who was a godly woman and a Wesleyan Methodist. Admiring her grace, and despairing of rectifying her theology, we are told that he closed their discussions by saying, "Madam, you are like your own clock: it strikes the wrong hour, but the hands are always right." Strange to say, no words can better express Brownlow North's strong Calvinism than Wesley's hymn :—

"Stay, Thou insulted Spirit, stay,
Though I have done Thee such despite,
Nor cast the sinner quite away,
Nor take Thine everlasting flight!
Though I have steeled my stubborn heart,
And still shook off my guilty fears,
And vexed and urged Thee to depart
For many long rebellious years,
This only woe I deprecate,
This only plague I pray remove,
Nor leave me in my lost estate,
Nor curse me with this want of love."

V. *FAITH AND FEELING.*

THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

"Oh how unlike the complex works of man,
Heaven's easy, artless, unencumbered plan!

* * * * * *

Inscribed above the portals from afar,
Conspicuous as the brightness of a star,
Legible only by the light they give,
Stand the soul-quickening words, BELIEVE AND LIVE."

COWPER.

"The Son of man must be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life."—JOHN iii. 14, 15.

JUSTIFICATION by faith was the great watchword of the Reformers. It was their battle-cry, with which they overturned that justification by works which filled the exchequer of the Church of Rome, and which is precious still to men of carnal reason. If the Word of God was the foundation-stone of the Reformers, the first doctrine which they built on that foundation was the righteousness of faith. The act of justification is external to a man, as the work of sanctification is internal. It is an act and sentence from the lips of God the Judge, whose word alone is authoritative. According to Luther's famous aphorism, it is the article of a standing or a falling church.

Under the reign of Moderatism in Scotland, minis-

ters and people had to a large extent returned to the exploded doctrine of a righteousness by works, in everything except the name: but with the reviving spiritual life of the present century, this unscriptural dogma had been dislodged once more from the churches, although it lingered in certain districts, and in many congregations, and in numberless hearts and minds over the land. To them the preaching that a sinner is justified by free grace through faith was news indeed, and Brownlow North published it boldly and loudly in their hearing, even as Luther and Calvin and Knox had done.

But he found another tendency that had crept in almost unawares in many congregations where the preaching was evangelical, and which was causing much distress and hindrance to sin-burdened souls. It arose from a want of a clear scriptural knowledge that justification is an objective act, that God justifies the ungodly, that this is the very entrance into the kingdom of grace, and that all evidences of grace in the heart are to be sought after this, and not before it. It probably arose in part from the preaching of many of the most honoured ministers of Christ having become very subjective in its tone, a cast of teaching very helpful to the people of the Lord, but not so helpful to those who are asking tearfully and fearfully the way to Zion. Had this tendency gone on unchecked, it might have landed us in mysticism; and it was checked, perhaps with a somewhat rough hand, by Brownlow North. All over Scotland he found

many who had been trained and taught by godly ministers examining their own hearts for tokens of grace, for pious frames and feelings of devotion, or of sadness, or of gladness, as grounds of acceptance, in place of looking simply to the Cross. They knew indeed that that Cross, with its great sin-atoning sacrifice, is the only ground of reconciliation with the God they had offended, but they did not know that the sole instrument of justification is faith, and in no case feeling, or sensibility, or emotion.

We cannot but think that the absence of the emotional element in his teaching, probably caused in part by a lack of it in his own mental character, was a defect, and that his preaching would have been more attractive to many, and still more widely useful, had it allowed a larger and truer place to the religious affections. This element was prominent in the preaching and hymns of the Wesleys in England, and of the great Highland preachers in Scotland, not to speak of such men as Samuel Rutherford and McCheyne, whose deep stirrings of the affections in their writings have filled the Lord's house in Scotland with the odour of their precious ointment for long years and generations after the alabaster vessel from which it was poured had been broken, and in the grave had mingled with its kindred dust.

Mr. North's preaching was addressed to the understanding, which he sought to enlighten, and to the will, which he sought to persuade, rather than to the tender chords of feeling and affection in the human

heart. But while this is the case, there is no doubt that he did inestimable service to many in leading them away from most unhealthy and fruitless introspection to a simple looking to the crucified Saviour, and as great service to many others who were resting on their transient and ever-changing religious sensibility and feeling, in place of Jesus Christ the only Rock. When the sinner is satisfied with these, he is seduced into a false and fatal faith in self, instead of being led to a true and vital faith in Christ; and when through God's grace he can find no comfort or satisfaction in his feelings, he is led to go heavily and uncertainly all his days, instead of with firm and joyful footsteps following his Lord as all his confidence as well as his desire.

Repentance he rightly shows not to consist in tears, nor in outward reformation, but in the mental act of change of mind and turning to God producing reformation. But it must always, if true, be the result of a sense of sin's exceeding sinfulness, which is ever humbling and saddening to convinced sinners, although in very various degrees: and often it is only after the soul has repented and believed that the deepest fountains of heart sorrow and the sluices of the weeping eyes are opened. According to the Westminster divines, Repentance is a heaven-descended grace, the daughter of "true sense of sin" and "apprehension of God's mercy;" and though her birth into the soul of man is sometimes long protracted and at other times sudden, yet she is always

born with pain and sigh, with travail-pangs and sorrow, so that "with grief and hatred of his sin the sinner turns from it to God with purpose and endeavour after new obedience." But assuredly Mr. North could not too strongly state that the mental emotions are neither the meritorious ground nor the apprehending means of justification.

Mr. North often said that every anxious inquirer he ever met with began to converse with him by talking about his own "feelings." His teaching on this subject is stated in a connected form in the tract published under the title "I feel," and also in one of his earliest tracts, "Trust God," but he enforced it in all his addresses and publications.

We give the following from his annotated Bible: "Religion is not a thing of mere feeling, but a patient, plodding, perpetual, painstaking, persevering life of obedience to the will of God, springing out of an habitual faith that our labour is not in vain in the Lord." "If we would have God to hear us, we must be honest with Him, and confess our sins of thought, word, and deed honestly; and if we do this trusting to the atonement made by Jesus, we may say, "Thou heardest me," for God has promised to hear, and we must believe He does, *whether we feel it or not.*" "God's word is steadfast rock; rest on it, so in trial, sickness, and death, your soul shall be steadfast, founded on a rock. If you have only feeling, where are you when the feeling is gone?" "Judge yourselves, not by feeling, but by conduct. We know

our love to men, not by feeling love, but by doing to them what we would have them do to us." "The proof that any one has received the Holy Spirit is not a sensation, but power over the enemy."

Another doctrine on which Brownlow North laid great stress was that of the true and proper Divinity of Jesus Christ. In our recollection of his preaching, which is confined to the first ten years of his public ministry, we do not indeed recall this doctrine as being one specially claiming notice; but in his study Bible we have found every text bearing upon the divinity of the Saviour carefully marked and annotated in his own terse and striking manner, and the last work he printed was an exposition of John v. 16—30, written in defence of this great truth, and published under the title of "Christ the Saviour and Christ the Judge." From this we draw the inference that he expected the next attack upon the faith of God's children to be made upon this doctrine. His judgment was both shrewd and sound in such matters, while, from the very large number of persons who opened their mind to him in private upon their religious difficulties, his opportunities of becoming acquainted with the tendencies of thought in religion were extensive.

In the work referred to he says: "There is at this day, and in this generation, a large body of influential and well-educated people who, professing to believe the Bible, will yet tell you that the Lord Jesus Christ is not, and never professed to be,

God. At the same time they will tell you He was the best man that ever lived upon earth, a pattern of every goodness, morality, and virtue, one who has left us an example that we shall do well to follow, but still a man, only a man, and nothing but a man. Verily may we not ask with St. Paul, 'Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?' A man, nothing but a man, and yet the very best man that ever lived upon earth! Away with such rubbish, such soul-destroying rubbish, away with it! Either the Lord Jesus Christ was the greatest impostor, the greatest liar and cheat ever born of woman, and has done more harm on earth than was ever done since the fall of Adam, or He was God. What! a good man, and yet only a man, and claim to do whatever God as God could do! What! a good man, and yet only a man, and claim to raise dead bodies, quicken dead souls, be the Saviour and Judge of the world, and receive as His right the honour that is due to God only! (John v. 19—22.)" Thus scathingly did he expose those who hold

> "The wondrous birth at Bethlehem
> A fiction of the wandering brain."

In addition to these great leading doctrines, Brownlow North's preaching was distinguished by the vivid presentation which he gave of the existence, personality, and power over man of fallen spirits, and of Satan their great head. All who ever heard him must have been struck by this. At present it is

fashionable in certain circles even of religious society to call these views into question, and to attribute any clear statements regarding the existence of fallen spirits to a superstitious or an over-excited imagination. The same views and statements have characterised some of the very foremost divines, such as Luther and Bunyan, Milton and Dante, as much as Brownlow North. But we are told the idea may be poetical, or may suit a popular preacher, but is not philosophical. In reply to this we would draw attention to the fact that the denial of the existence of sinful angels is very generally associated with defective and erroneous views regarding sin itself. If sin does exist at all, if responsible creatures have fallen and rebelled against their Maker, there is no inherent improbability that this rebellion may have extended to other classes of intelligences as well as man. Sin and holiness are moral opposites independent of time and place.

Almost all the religions of the world have recognised the evil influence of fallen spirits ; the purest and most philosophical of them all, Zoroastrianism, gives the greatest prominence to this belief, making the god of evil and darkness powerful almost as the God of holiness and light. Scripture itself clearly intimates to us their existence and power over fallen men, and had this not been practically important for men to know, it had not been revealed. Nor was it merely a part of the pictorial teaching suited for the infancy of the Church : the revelation regarding it is much

clearer in the later Old Testament books than in the earlier, and is most fully developed in the New Testament, in the teaching of Christ and His apostles. The glory, the extent, and the power of the Satanic dominion are developed in revelation in parallel columns with the development of the Messianic. Surely then Brownlow North did right in assigning to the god of this world, and the king of fallen spirits, that power and influence over the spirits of men which he is represented in the Divine Word as exercising, and in pressing upon men constantly that there are two kingdoms, two Potentates, two Gods, one worshipped and obeyed by the children of this world, the other by the children of light.

In a sermon on Proverbs viii., preached at Londonderry, he said that "the man who seeks the things of time and sense more than the things of God prays to the devil. When man sinned, God left him, and the devil took possession of him. Every man is inhabited either by the devil alone, or by God and the devil, the latter being kept under control. If any were able to be indifferent about eternity, they had received that power from the devil, a power which he did not possess himself, for he trembled while he believed. Most men believe the devil, and disbelieve God. The devil wishes to produce indifference, and to keep people in forgetfulness of God, so that each day they may be nearer hell. It is a want of simple belief in such passages as 1 Peter v. 8 that destroys men. They do not believe in a real devil. He is

a reality, and we are here taught how to resist him."

On the great central doctrine of the Atonement he held the strictly Calvinistic view. Regarding its extent his comment on John i. 29 is, "'The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,' *i.e.*, of all who will give their sins to Him to carry away; His blood is *sufficient* for all, though *efficient* only for those who believe." The fact that he did not preach universal redemption, but regarded Christ as dying as the representative of His covenant people, did not in the least fetter him in making the fullest and freest offer of the great sacrifice to every sinner. He says, "Christ died that He may have *a gift of His death* to give to every lost sinner who will accept it from Him."

Another doctrine to which he attached great weight was the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, as well as the application of His atoning death, to the sinner. Short notices of his teaching on this important subject are given in other parts of this volume. (See Index.)

From this *resumé* of Mr. North's teaching it will be seen, as was once remarked of him, that the mission given to him was what Coleridge in his "Aids to Reflection" says is one of the most useful a man can be employed in, viz., that of rescuing admitted truths from the neglect caused by the very circumstance of their universal admission." And the present tendency of theology proves that such neglect ends in doubt and denial of the truths that were formerly unquestioned.

WORK IN IRELAND AND IN LONDON.

"Blest by our heavenly Father's hand
Were thy deep love and tender care,
Thy ministry and fervent prayer,
To those who drew
By thousands round thee, in the hour
Of prayerful waiting, hushed and deep,
And those who first, rejoicing, heard
Through thee the Gospel's glorious word,
Seals of thy true apostleship." WHITTIER.

"Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel!"—1 COR. ix. 16.

XI.

In the early part of 1859, that remarkable work of grace broke out in the north of Ireland, which must ever rank as one of the most notable Revivals of modern times. It had been preceded by the great American Revival of 1858, and was succeeded by the Revival in Scotland of 1860. Indeed, the latter awakening may be said to have spread to us from Ulster by a kind of spiritual sympathy or contagion; for, as the late Professor Miller remarked, when he announced in our house the first news of its having touched the Scottish shores, it came just in the track that cholera would have come, crossing the Channel at its narrowest point, and appearing first on the coast of Ayrshire, from which on a clear day a keen eye can descry the outline of the hills of Antrim.

This fact does not reduce that remarkable awakening to a mere epidemic, though it was accompanied by physical phenomena; for there are sympathies that are spiritual and mental, that communicate themselves from soul to soul under the Divine direction, even as those do that are physical. There are sympathies that compact nations together as well as families; and just as a work of grace in a family or a

congregation often affects the whole members, and will do so always, unless resistance be offered to it, so no reason can be adduced why the same law of moral and spiritual susceptibility should not influence whole nations. The counties of Ayr and Renfrew, where the revival began in Scotland, were not only connected with the sister Isle by proximity, but were even more closely associated with her by the ties of race and of intercourse, the ports of Greenock and Ardrossan being the two chief outlets for passenger traffic between Scotland and the north of Ireland.

Mr. North's work in Scotland during the previous three years had prepared the way for the general wave of revival which in 1860 burst upon our land. Indeed, the springtide of blessing under his ministry, as attested by the letters of thanksgiving sent to him, reached its highest point in 1858 and 1859, and was therefore independent of the revivals in Ireland and America. It served at the same time as a providential preparation for the advent of that general awakening here, which in all human likelihood might otherwise have had as slight and partial effect upon Scotland as it had upon England and the Scottish Highlands; for in neither of these parts of the island had there been such deep ploughing of the soil of men's hearts which in the Scottish Lowlands had been stirred to its depths with the ploughshare of conviction under this Baptist-like preacher of Repentance.

When the news of the wonderful awakening in

Ulster reached this land, many of our most experienced and godly ministers crossed over to witness with their own eyes this remarkable movement among a people sprung from our own, to form a judgment at first-hand as to whether it was genuine or spurious, to render what assistance they could to the overwrought ministers there, and to seek to receive for themselves, and carry home to their flocks, a new baptism of spiritual life.

The following recollections of Mr. North's visit to Ireland are from the pen of his beloved friend and fellow-labourer, James Balfour, Esq., of Edinburgh, who was one of the friends who accompanied him on this tour:—

"It was my privilege to accompany Mr. North to Ireland at the time of the revival in 1859. We sailed from Greenock on a fine summer evening, and paced the deck together most of the night, as we steamed down the Clyde; the water and the surrounding mountains being purpled by the fading light far into the night, and the coast of Ireland brightened, as we approached it, by the early dawn. I remember a little incident that happened at Greenock just before we left. We had gone into a small bookseller's shop to buy a newspaper, and he pointed out to me a copy of the 'Revival' and a cheap irreligious magazine lying side by side, saying, 'What two books to be together!' The shopman interfered, and said, 'You are talking, sir, about what you know nothing of.' 'How so?' said Mr. North. 'Because you never read these books.' 'Yes, I have.' 'Have you read the magazine?' 'Yes, I have; I read it for many years. It is very clever, but very wicked. I am a changed man since then.' 'I know best what will sell,' replied the

shopkeeper. 'Oh, yes, if you are living only for this world; but remember you are immortal.' In leaving the shop, he gave him his own tract with that title, 'You are Immortal.'

"In Ireland we were witnesses together of the physical prostrations that were the accompaniments of the revival there. Mr. North did not pretend either to explain them or to understand them; but he used to say, 'Either they are of the devil, or of man, or of God. They cannot be of the devil, for he never makes men anxious about their souls, or desirous of flying to God. They cannot be of man, for he cannot do it if he would. If he could, he oftener would. Then it must be of God.'

"After staying a while in Ulster, we went to Dublin, and attended a meeting of the Irish General Assembly, and listened together for some hours to the ministers in private conference, telling the wondrous and thrilling stories of redeeming love in their various parishes, till every eye was moistened and every heart was swelling under the conscious influence of the Holy Ghost. Mr. North on a subsequent day addressed the Assembly, and was received with deep respect, and listened to amid profound silence."

Before leaving Scotland, Mr. North had received a communication from the Moderator of the Irish Presbyterian Church, the Rev. John Johnstone of Tullylish, informing him of the very interesting movement that was taking place within their bounds, and inviting him to cross the Channel, and address their Assembly, which was to meet in Dublin; and it was in accordance with this request that he repaired thither. Mr. Johnstone had been present in the General Assembly of the Free Church in the month

of May, when Mr. North was formally commissioned as an evangelist, and he thought that a visit from one so honoured in the work would be beneficial both to the ministers and the congregations of his own Church. We can find no formal record of this address, but we may here insert the Resolution of the Irish Assembly of 1863, which again requested Mr. North to address them.

The Resolution of Assembly was formally conveyed to Mr. North by the Moderator, in the following terms :—

"ASSEMBLY HOUSE, BELFAST.
"*13th July*, 1863.

"Sir,—It affords me very sincere pleasure, personally as well as officially, to be the means of conveying to you the accompanying Resolution.

"I have the honour to be, sir, your obedient servant,
"JOHN ROGERS, *Moderator*."

The Resolution itself is as follows :—

"At Belfast, the 11th day of July, 1863 years, which day the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland being met and constituted,

"Brownlow North, Esq., the honoured Evangelist of the Free Church of Scotland, having at a previous Session addressed the Assembly, it was moved and unanimously agreed,—

"'That this Assembly have heard with deep interest the heart-searching and useful address of Brownlow North, Esq. We return to that gentleman our warmest thanks for his kindness in coming from a distance, and at some inconvenience, to address us, and beg to assure him of our

continued sympathy in all his labours in the cause of our common Lord, and of our sincere prayers for the Divine blessing upon them.'

"Extracted from the Minutes of Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

"(Signed) ROBERT PARK, A.M., *Clerk of Assembly.*"

Some years later, in 1867, Mr. North also addressed the Synod of the English Presbyterian Church at Manchester, by their special request.

In the autumn of 1859, Mr. North received an invitation, through the Rev. Professor Plumer, of the Old School Presbyterian Church, Alleghany, Pa., to visit the United States, and labour for a time in their great cities, but this he never accomplished. Professor Plumer said that one of their leading Church Courts which was about to meet, would gladly send him a formal invitation, should that be thought best.

To return to his work during his first visit to Ireland in 1859;—both before and after the meeting of the General Assembly he preached in various towns throughout Ulster, and not a few of those who were awakened under him were the subjects of physical prostration, although Mr. North was far from desiring to foster these manifestations.

In the first week of August he preached in Londonderry. The newspapers reported that between 4000 and 5000 persons of all classes assembled to hear him in the Victoria Market on Sunday, on which occasion he read and commented on the eighth chapter of Proverbs. He said that "no one would leave that

assembly the same person as he entered it. As soon as man sinned he died spiritually. Death was being without God. In God was life, out of Him was no life. All that could guide a man upward left him when he sinned, and the devil took possession of him. The precise moment would come when each would die and stand face to face with Jesus Christ. Jesus is the way through whom we must go back to God. We must go through the rent veil of the flesh of Jesus. Man's wisdom only led him to dishonour God and destroy himself. He was once staying in a house with the high and noble, when a scoffer said, 'The instinct of the brute is higher than the reason of man.' He was indignant when he heard the remark, but afterwards he reflected that the brute had the instinct as God gave it, but man had not reason as God gave it. He asked those who followed their own wisdom what hope they had, though they gained the whole world, of escaping hell, unless the Bible were a lie? What was the great conflict between God and man? It was whether man would believe his own heart or the wisdom of God. If they believed that Christ's yoke was easy, they would take it up that night. The speaker in the eighth of Proverbs was the Son of God. It was a call to the foolish and simple to turn at once from their folly. To fear God was to hate sin,—to love God was to keep His commandments. Sinners would be saved by faith, and not by their own feelings. The proof that they had received the Holy Spirit was not a sensation, but

power over sin, which was their great enemy. There was one great Gospel commandment, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.' When his own spirits were low, he often relied on the words, 'Trust in the Lord *at all times.*' He urged believers to abide in Christ. A sickly-looking branch by remaining in the tree would become strong and vigorous. The love of Christ to men was like the Father's love to his own Son.' Such is an outline of his discourse.

In the evening he preached again to an overflowing congregation, from Genesis xxiv. 38: "Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go." He had given an address from this text very shortly after he began his work in the autumn of 1856, in Inverness, and he has stated that he did not know that he had ever preached that sermon without hearing of blessing resulting from it. He afterwards published it in an amplified form, under the title of "Yes or No." (Hunt and Co.) On Monday evening he preached again in the first Presbyterian Church, on the Parable of the Sower (which has also been published in the form of a tract), and on Tuesday evening from Rev. iii. 14—22, the message to the Laodicean Church; and when he asked the anxious to remain to a second meeting, few left the building.

After preaching in many other localities, he left for Scotland on the 26th of August. The following short notice of his services is taken from the *Banner of Ulster*, of August 27th, which, along with the other newspapers, gave an account of his work:—

"Mr. North left by the Scotch steamer yesterday evening, intending, we believe, to rest for a time after his arduous labours. Since he came to Ireland he has, we understand, delivered about fifty addresses, many of them to several thousands of auditors. The tendency of all his teachings and exhortations has been to discountenance reliance upon mere feeling, to shut men up into the faith, and to exalt and magnify the written Word. Such ministrations at such a time have been eminently seasonable, and we have reason to believe they have been largely blessed. Of the number awakened under his fervent and powerful appeals it is impossible to form a correct estimate. Wherever he has gone, the most encouraging evidences of his success have been presented. Anxious inquirers, to an extent unknown before, have sought his counsel, and hundreds more, we are assured, have been confirmed and stimulated by his weighty utterances. We have reason to believe that, while communicating of his experience to others, he himself has been refreshed and quickened by what he has seen of the wonderful work of grace among us, and that he leaves us, notwithstanding his incessant labours, invigorated with new energy for the prosecution of that mission to which he has devoted himself as the great business of his life."

But perhaps a more vivid estimate of his work and its results may be derived from letters written to him after his departure, by ministers to whose congregations he had preached the word of life.

The following is part of a correspondence from the Presbyterian minister of Newtonlimavady, well known by many in Scotland.

"N'L'VADY, *17th August*, 1859.

"MY DEAR MR. NORTH,

"I have waited until I could report respecting the influences of your visit. I have now reason to assure you that God has greatly blessed the word you addressed to us. A number of souls have been converted, and a still greater number are blessing God that their faith in Jesus and His written Word has been greatly confirmed. I bless God that the sickly and unscriptural fervours, that were so widely spreading, have been arrested, and society breathes the purer atmosphere of simple trust in the promises of God. The Roman Catholic found peace, and has gone home to tell what God has done for his soul. During the prostration a Bible dropped from his pocket, which he afterwards fervently pressed to his heart. A young woman on a visit from Scotland to friends in N'L'vady, began by making light of God's work, but the morning after your last service she found peace in believing. She is praying most anxiously for Scotland, that the Lord may make it like the north of Ireland. A girl in the workhouse was sweeping the door, and hearing your voice (the wind blowing that way) she distinctly heard you repeat the invitation, 'Whosoever will, let him come.' She staggered into the house, fell prostrate before God, and found immediate peace. I'll keep a record of cases as they occur, and show them to you when you come back to us. The cry is, When will he come back to us again? The ground has been measured where the people stood at your last open-air service, and it has been calculated that more than 12,000 persons were present. I think we will have 20,000 when you next visit us.

. . . . You will be glad to know that even in the heat and burden of harvest, the work of God goes on with unabated interest. I held eleven public meetings last week, taking the dinner hour, from one till two o'clock, and in the evening from seven till nine, and everywhere I went we had crowded meetings. Our people began last Lord's day at half-past seven in the morning, pleading for the outpouring of God's Spirit upon the Sabbath school; and with the exception of their hours for breakfast, dinner, and tea, the whole day was spent in devotional exercises up to the hour of ten at night. They would not, could not part; it was a blessed season of the sweetest communion. There is hardly a meeting I hold in the country but I hear some sinner telling of mercy received, or some child of God speaking of great enlargement of heart through your services, and I invariably beg of them to prove their love to you by commending you and yours to the oversight of the Saviour. We have had several cases of conversion from Rome. We had two Roman converts with us lately: they are the finest specimens of young Christians I ever met. Oh, how different! One was like John, all love, so sweet and gentle; he had so put on Christ, that you could see nothing but Jesus: the other like Peter, all boldness and fire; he had so put on the armour of light, that he seemed as one who could venture to do and dare anything in the name of Jesus. They openly and boldly spoke in many places in the name of Jesus, and God has blessed their appeals. Many Roman Catholics have attended, and several have resolved to leave the Church of Rome. I feel persuaded, if united prayer continue to ascend for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Romish priests and people, the papacy in Ireland will be overthrown. They are trembling; God allwise, knew the best way to reach the blinded, bigoted, and superstitious papists. The terrific prostrations that are

weekly occurring in their chapels, and the cries of the agonized for the blood of Jesus, as they fall beside their altars, are producing results (as yet) known only to God. One peculiarity of the present movement is the coming of *poor simpletons* to Jesus. John ——, a creature who gathered rags, has been for eight weeks one of the most devout worshippers of the Lord, and although he confesses that he is a poor sinner, yet his hope is so fixed in Jesus, that he lives in prayer and praise. In L—— meeting-house a prayer-meeting was held on Monday evening. After divine service was over, a Roman Catholic simpleton, who had travelled two miles, came forward. He was very tall, and clothed in a woman's dress. He earnestly requested that the minister and people would pray 'that he might be washed in Christ's precious blood.' Singular sight, and still more singular request! The cases of the deaf, dumb, and blind frequently occur, and, so far as I can judge, the hand of the same God is in this visitation. Doubting souls have come forth revived and comforted. In some cases, like Zacharias, the doubting were struck dumb; in other cases, like Daniel (ch. x.), it seemed to be the result of a sight of the Divine Majesty presented to the soul. Several things have been said by them whilst recovering, for which they seem truly ashamed; but Peter on the mount spoke foolishly. Oh, I wish all our ministers would give over all their wise solutions of these strange visitations, and work for God! What we don't know we'll know hereafter. Meantime, we know Jesus is the physician for all, and His blood the balm for all.

"Yours in our own loved Lord,

"GEORGE STEEN."

It was in the end of the same year 1859, that Brownlow North first visited London on evangelistic work, where he was honoured to carry a light from

the fire which was glowing with such intense heat in Ulster, and had already begun to communicate its light and warmth to Scotland. For this we shall avail ourselves of a communication from his intimate friend James E. Mathieson, Esq., of 77, Lombard Street, who was much associated with him in this and in his subsequent visits to the capital, and who took an active part in organizing the meetings for both the upper and lower classes of society which have been productive of so much good.

"Mr. North, accompanied by Mr. Reginald Radcliffe, came to London at the close of 1859, to address the Young Men's Christian Association in Exeter Hall; and on 20th December, began a busy season which extended over five months. What had been intended for a brief stay became the first of a succession of prolonged visits to London, and is still felt to be memorable and precious by many grateful hearts. It was a time of blessing. The revival of religion which a year or two before had stirred the churches of America, and had next been manifested in signal awakenings in the north of Ireland, did not leave England and Scotland unmoved. Among other faithful men of that day one recalls the honoured name of Baptist Noel, who was among the first to offer hearty welcome to London to the new Evangelist, and invite him to occupy his pulpit. For several weeks, however, Mr. North and Mr. Radcliffe preached in the Presbyterian Church, Upper George Street, Marylebone, to audiences rapidly increasing in numbers, alike on the Lord's day and at week-night services. These two servants of Christ presented a very marked contrast in their diversity of gifts and personal appearance; the one deep chested and broad shouldered, in voice 'a son of thunder,' over-

whelming his hearers with the solemnity and reality of eternal things, and awakening the conviction that to trifle with them was most perilous, and using the Word as the 'hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces;' the other of fragile frame, intensity of feeling seeming to exhaust his strength, as with beseeching entreaty he pressed the audience to believe the love of God in Christ Jesus.

The thought happily suggested itself to some of Mr. North's friends that advantage might be taken of his presence in London to try and reach some of the upper classes during the height of the season of 1860; and for this end, Willis' Rooms were taken for a series of services, at an hour in the afternoon likely to secure the attendance of that capricious class, 'society.' The first of these meetings secured an attendance which encouraged its promoters, and paved the way for gradually increasing audiences during the succeeding weeks; and towards the close of the series, not only was there a crowded gathering, but a riveted attention; it was no longer the curiosity of idlers seeking a new distraction, and asking one another, 'What will this babbler say?' but rather the intense, if often unexpressed, heart-longing for higher and holier life, and the sometimes uttered repetition of the old anxious cry, 'What must I do to be saved?' for some were found to thrust aside conventional reserve, and seek in private conversation afterwards, a solution of soul difficulties, and guidance towards deeper acquaintance with the way of peace. These after-meetings were at that time a novelty, but then, and ever after, they have been found precious seasons of opportunity for personal dealing with souls.*

These meetings naturally brought forth invitations to take

* At the close of this series of meetings a special service was appointed for anxious inquirers, which was attended by between 500 and 600 persons.

part in the services for the people, with which we are now so familiar, but which eighteen years ago were still somewhat a novelty, held in theatres and great halls in various parts of London. The original conception of such gatherings may fairly be assigned to Mr. Spurgeon, and is one of the many debts which this generation owes to this gifted servant of Christ. A kind of necessity was laid upon Mr. Spurgeon, whilst his new tabernacle was being built, to find a place large enough to accommodate the multitude which thronged to hear the gospel from his lips every Lord's-day. Such a place was found in the Surrey Music Hall.

The happy thought, which Mr. Spurgeon's boldness suggested, was instantly caught hold of by the Christians of London, and the barrier of prejudice against the use of temples of worldly pleasure for a sacred and soul-saving purpose was broken down. No fewer than three committees were speedily at work to secure Theatres and large halls, and to provide the necessary expenses; and winter after winter ever since, a faithful testimony has been given to the poor of London concerning the free gift of God, eternal life through His Son, without money and without price. One step more in this interesting movement was the utilising of Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's Cathedral, and other cathedral churches throughout the land; so that even those who were shocked by the spectacle of preaching in the theatre, were moved to action within their own line of things, and turned these great national edifices to uses long unthought of.

In St. James's Hall, Piccadilly, and in several of the theatres of the east and south of London, North was privileged again and again to deliver his testimony, and with his intense earnestness enforce the necessity of decision for Christ, and preparedness to meet God. He used sometimes to tell his hearers that he believed he was more

anxious for their salvation than many among them were for themselves. Regarding the effect of these London services, I may transcribe the following letter from an honoured minister of the gospel, the Rev. Frank H. White, of Chelsea :—

"*August 22nd*, 1877.

"My dear Mr. Mathieson,

"My wife and her two sisters were awakened and brought to Christ, as you know, under Mr. North's preaching during the St. James's Hall services, about 1860. They had gone to hear Morley Punshon, and were told by one assisting at the services that on the following Sunday 'a gentleman would preach, whom if they once heard they would never forget.' They heard him. His text was, I believe, 'Wilt thou go with this man?' They knew little, very little, if any of Bible truth, and were utterly destitute of gospel light. They were literally transfixed with terror as they listened to Mr. North's awful description of the sinner's state and danger. 'I only remember,' says my wife, 'that I felt under his preaching that there was really a heaven and hell, and that Mr. North believed in both.'

This has always struck me about his preaching. It was so intensely realistic. It was impossible to listen and be indifferent, it seemed as if it must either excite the bitterest opposition, or else carry the heart's citadel as by storm, and compel to an immediate and unconditional surrender. The fact that at the time Mr. North began his testimony for Christ there was less of earnest preaching than at the present, may in some measure account for the peculiar freshness which seemed to belong to his ministry, and gave to his whole career a novelty alike startling and attractive.

His preaching, however, had in my opinion several elements which much of the preaching of to-day would be the better for. He told people of the wrath to come in

language, which, if strong, was not more so than was consistent with that fidelity without which a professed messenger from God can have no true claim upon another's attention, seeing he lacks the very first essential of a herald of truth. Mr. North had what Harrington Evans avowed to be the greatest need of his time, 'a deep sense of the reality of the penal judgment of God.'

Another striking feature of his ministry was, that he addressed the *consciences* of his hearers, spoke of sin in plain terms, and insisted upon *repentance toward God*, as equally needful to an entrance into the kingdom with faith in the Lord Jesus. But what, perhaps more than anything else, made his ministry so valuable, and should move us to pray the Lord to raise up more like him, was the fact that he gave no uncertain sound upon the doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ. I shall never forget his speaking on this subject in the Stafford Rooms. Taking for his text Rom. x. 4, 'Christ is the end (or fulfilment) of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth,' he remarked, 'Men in their endeavour to work out a righteousness of their own by keeping the law, generally begin *here* (pointing to the elbow of his left arm), and try to work up to the end; but they make no real progress, and only after repeated failures and falls do some see (pointing to the tip of his fingers) that *Christ* is the *end* of the law, and that in His perfect obedience alone they can be justified.'

"Yours affectionately,

"FRANK H. WHITE."

"It has been remarked that most of the evangelists who have accomplished great things in drawing sinners away from the world to Christ, have had one prominent idea or watchword which they made their own, and found powerful as a guiding thought for other souls. The love of God in

Christ was very prominent in Radcliffe's preaching; with Duncan Matheson the word 'Eternity' was constantly rung out as a warning knell; and perhaps the uppermost idea in North's exhortations was the persistently reiterated truth 'God is!' It had been a blessed, peace-giving thought to himself in an hour of agony.

Mr. North himself felt that the advantages he possessed as an English gentleman, with access to certain circles of society, formed part of the gift bestowed upon him to be laid out for the Master's glory; nor did he shrink from giving his testimony in season and out of season, in mixed company as well as amongst Christian friends; at the dinner table and in the railway carriage, not less than in the pulpit or from the platform. Not often, at least in the days now referred to, was there such a fine, daring spirit evinced as when at a large dinner party North would break in upon a worldly conversation with some pointed remark which startled and silenced the majority of the company; or when in some gathering of Christian people, occupied probably with conversation about the externals of their faith, he would thrust in an inquiry which at once put away questions of churches for the more urgent and pressing question of personal salvation, or turned talk about preachers aside to make way for the claims of Christ."

Such is an outline of this preacher's work in the metropolis for a succession of years, by one who was intimately acquainted with it.

HARVEST-WORK IN VARIOUS FIELDS.

"Should e'er Thy wonder-working grace
Triumph by our weak arm,
Let not our sinful fancy trace
Aught human in the charm;
To our own nets ne'er bow we down,
Lest on the eternal shore
The angels, while our draught they own,
Reject us evermore!"

KEBLE.

"Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season. Do the work of an evangelist; make full proof of thy ministry."—2 TIM. iv. 2, 5.

XII.

In the course of this memoir we have already given numerous evidences of the fruits of Mr. North's labours, and the reader will probably have formed a not inaccurate general conception of the widespread results of his ministry during its whole course in widely separated districts and cities of Scotland, England, and Ireland. It may, however, prove both interesting and useful to present distinct testimonies, written by those who were well qualified to form an accurate and sound judgment from their own observation of the effects of his labours in their own neighbourhood. Some of these testimonies were written soon after his visit to the locality, others after an interval of five or six years, while others are reminiscences of his work after an interval of fifteen or twenty years. The first letter is from the much-respected Free Church minister of the first charge in Thurso, and refers to his visit to that town in 1858, which was one of the years in which he reaped his greatest number of sheaves. He had gone there at the pressing request of his friend, the esteemed Sir George Sinclair.

Visit to Thurso in 1858.

"Thurso, *Dec. 8th*, 1858.

"My dear Brother,—Ever since you left I had in view writing to you, and was putting off from time to time that I might be able to speak more decidedly as to the state of matters in this place; and now I am sure you will rejoice to know that the expectations raised at the time of your visit have not been disappointed. Since you left, my time has been chiefly occupied in conversing with individuals on the state of their souls. Of these, many were impressed or brought to the knowledge of the truth when you and Mr. Grant were here. I am thankful to say that the interest in Divine things is not abating. The young converts continue steadfast, and some of them manifest a sweet gospel spirit in a way that interests and refreshes me much. At our communion in the end of October, which was but four months after the preceding one, there were twenty-five new communicants, of whom about half received the truth when you and Mr. Grant were among us. Besides these, several young people who received the truth at the same time did not apply for admission; but I have almost the whole of them, in company with a good many others, under instruction at a Bible-class, and I am thankful to see them holding fast, and, so far as I can learn, walking in the truth. A very pleasing change has taken place in a class that used to be rather a careless one here, that of female house-servants. It is interesting to hear these girls tell in their own way the particular manner in which an impression was first made on them.

"One said, 'I neglected prayer, and I was impressed by hearing Mr. North tell how he got up to pray when his servant was present, and now I pray.'

"Another said to me, 'What impressed me was Mr. North's praying for you the last time he preached in your

church, that you might have many seals to your ministry, and so it became a question with me if I was to be one of them.'

"Another was impressed on the communion Sabbath, in church, by her companion rising from her side, and going to the communion table, so that she could not rest till she too became a Christian. And so on. On the whole I do feel deeply grateful to the Lord that He has sent you to us this year again, and also your dear friend Mr. Grant. I earnestly pray that the Lord may continue to bless your labours abundantly, and may cause you in all things to prosper, and be in health, even as your soul prospereth.

"Yours very affectionately in the Lord,

"W. Ross Taylor."

The last two cases particularised in this letter will show that it was a time when the Lord's Spirit was very abundantly poured out, and when souls were, under His sovereign grace, awakened and brought to the Lord by means or words the most simple, and the most unlikely in ordinary seasons to accomplish such great results. As another instance of the same character, we may mention the case of a cabman who came to Mr. North in deep distress. When he asked him what part of the sermon had been the means of arousing him to such concern about his soul, he said that it was no part of the sermon, but a sentence in his prayer; and on his asking what the sentence was, he replied, "Oh, sir, it was when you said, 'We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and have done those things which we ought not to have done,' and I felt that was just my case."

Visit to Rothesay in 1858.

In regard to the results of the evangelist's visit to this busy coast-town and watering-place, we are able to give the valuable testimony of the Rev. Robert Elder, D.D., one whose experience in dealing with souls, and soundness of judgment, must command the respect of all. This testimony is borne at two different dates, the first being in a letter addressed to Mr. North two months after his visit, the second in a letter addressed to the author exactly twenty years later.

"Rothesay, *April 21st*, 1858.

"I must say, my dear Brother, whatever the results may ultimately be, I have met with more to encourage me since you were last here than I have ever had before during my ministry here or elsewhere. Perhaps I am too cautious, but still I do feel my heart drawn and stirred up even by the first symptoms of earnestness in seeking the Lord. Our joint prayer-meetings are still kept up with a large and undiminished attendance. There is evidently a deep interest felt in them, and undoubtedly we have the praying people of the place with us. I have now had about thirty conversing with me under less or more concern, sixteen of whom did not come to converse with you at all, though most of them were impressed under your preaching. I believe I have had more than any of the other ministers; but they have had some also, I cannot say how many up to this time. There is, as you might expect, a great variety among them in respect of knowledge, conviction, light, hope, etc. Some who were formerly quite careless are very ignorant, though in the meantime much concerned and earnest

to attend all means. Two of the above number are Roman Catholics, and two have stated to me that they had previously fallen into open sin. A considerable number of them, however, are my own regular hearers, and attending my classes: they were formerly impressed, some more, and others less, but were most of them greatly quickened and stirred up by your addresses. I have every hope of a good many of them, and what I particularly like is that they seem to be getting deeper views of their own sin and helplessness, and of their need of the Holy Ghost's teaching and power to make them find all their life and hope in following Christ. The two who came first to you are going on very hopefully, and the younger of them, who teaches in one of our Sabbath schools, brought up to me a few days ago one of her scholars, an interesting girl of twelve or fourteen, under great concern in connection with her teacher's solemn warnings and exhortations.

"One kind of agency you will be delighted to hear of. I was aware that several young women at the mills were quite decided before, and so I spoke to some of them to try and get hold of the new inquirers, and draw them into fellowship with themselves, and away from their ungodly associates. This they have been doing with great zeal, and have quietly formed a meeting of their own, where they read and pray together, and from which they bring them to other meetings and classes. Some of our good ladies also are very active.

"I am trying to keep notes as to the apparent state and progress of those who come under my eye, and am often in communication with others who are looking after them.

"I ever remain

"Yours with respect and affection,

"ROBERT ELDER."

Twenty years have now elapsed since these ser-

vices, and Dr. Elder has kindly written to us his estimate and retrospect of the character of the work.

"ROTHESAY, *Feb. 7th*, 1878.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have too long delayed writing to you; but I was anxious before writing to see a few of those who were impressed at the time referred to, and who have maintained a consistent profession, and to get some information regarding others who have dropped out of my view. One of those referred to in my old letter died several years ago in great hope, indeed I may say in 'the full assurance of hope,' and her sister has held fast her profession, and is still one of our most earnest and consistent Christian workers.

"Mr. North's visit to this place was at a very early stage of his evangelistic work; he had then no 'inquiry meetings' in the now ordinary sense of that expression, nor did he separate those whom he counted 'converts' from the rest. He was here only for four or five days, and on the second occasion of his addressing the people, seeing some apparently impressed, he asked if I would give him leave to ask any who might wish to speak with him to come next day to my house, where he stayed. I think twenty-four came, and after conversing with them he gave me their names. Both in private and in his public addresses he very earnestly urged all who felt concern to wait on the *regular ministrations* of their pastors, and to attend the *Bible-classes*.

"I remember that a great many came immediately after to my own class, and I believe to the classes of the other congregations interested. There were also several fellowship and prayer-meetings kept up for a considerable time, especially among the young women, one of these having been in existence before Mr. North's visit, but having a larger attendance afterwards.

"Referring to my notes of that period, an interesting and instructive fact has been recalled to my mind. Our Communion came on in June, about four months after Mr. North was here, and while I was frequently conversing with those under concern. The great proportion of those impressed preferred to remain back, and comparatively few on that occasion became communicants, although I would have had great pleasure in admitting them. I found that the *best* of them, after a good deal of emotion and warm feeling, were led after a time to far deeper views of sin and helplessness and a lost condition than they had at first, and were afraid to make a profession of their faith. But on the next occasion, in January following, I had, I think, the largest number of young communicants I have ever had here, and many of these I admitted with the greatest comfort. In June of the following year also I had the same experience. I have kept short notes regarding sixty-two persons who conversed with me in 1858, 1859, under more or less concern. Of many of these I can now find no trace. A considerable number, I grieve to say, went back from their impressions, and some lapsed into open wickedness. But a large proportion turned out well, giving hopeful evidence of a saving change. A few I have attended on their deathbeds, and have been cheered by the hope that they have gone to be with Christ. A good many are away from this place, and settled elsewhere; but many are still living here, and are earnest and consistent members of my congregation, some of them being active and earnest workers on the Lord's side.

"I remain, yours affectionately,

"ROBERT ELDER."

ADDRESSES TO STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITIES.

Mr. North at different times made special efforts to reach young men, and these efforts were largely

blessed. During the whole of his ministry, he made it a practice occasionally to intimate a special service for young men, or for men only, and in this way many were induced to go and hear the gospel at his lips who would never have dreamed of attending an ordinary evangelistic service. The writer vividly recalls, after an interval of twenty years, the deep solemnity that seemed to overhang and overawe the vast crowds of men, principally young men, who thronged to the services specially designed for them in Free St. Luke's, Edinburgh, in the winters of 1858-59-60; and from other parts of this volume it will be seen that to the last, in the great cities of England, he drew thousands of young men to hear him, and that a rich blessing from the great Master of assemblies still accompanied these efforts to arrest and save those who were in the height of their health and youth, and were like the prodigal living upon husks fit only for swine, in a country that was far from their heavenly Father's house. Through the earnest and pointed appeals of the preacher, many a spendthrift, fast young man, and lapsing drunkard, was led to exclaim, "I will arise and go to my Father."

The Young Men's Christian Associations in our cities, and even in small towns, were often the agency which invited him to come and hold a series of meetings in their districts, and it is both a touching and a striking proof of the abiding character of his work upon those impressed, that in perusing the letters from

the secretaries of these associations, the eye from time to time is attracted to a P.S., marked private, in which, after conveying the official invitation of the society over which he presided, the writer added some such words as these, "Though I have never met you, it may interest you to know that you were the means of bringing me to the knowledge of Christ in such a place, so many years ago."

It may be interesting to relate something of the addresses which by special invitation he delivered to the students of our universities on more than one occasion. Mr. North is the only layman, and one of the very few preachers, whether clerical or lay, who have enjoyed the great opportunity of addressing on the subject of their soul's eternal interests, at the most critical and important period of their lives, the young men who were preparing to fill the various learned professions of the land.

In Glasgow, during the revival of 1859-60, arrangements were made for a series of meetings, specially intended for students; and Mr. North was asked to address several of these. The Rev. Alexander Andrew, of Glasgow, has kindly communicated to us his recollection of these addresses.

"The meetings were largely attended, and the impressions made upon many were most wholesome. I can recall some of the earnest utterances of the good man at this hour, how he told us to beware of becoming *cumberers of the ground*, for such we would certainly be, if we ventured forward to the holy ministry unconverted. With great vivid-

ness he pictured the case of a man occupying some pulpit and some corner of the vineyard, who knew not the Lord, and preached not His gospel, how he not only failed himself to bring light and blessing into the hearts of his people, but prevented, by his presence there, some one from coming in who would be a means of blessing. Oh, beware, he said, of being *cumberers of the ground!*

"Then I think I still see the flashes of indignation that came from him as he spoke of such as only sought to enter the gospel ministry for the sake of social position and a comfortable stipend. He seemed specially anxious that we, as students and aspirants to such a sacred office, should guard against a worldly spirit.

"It was faithful dealing, and when followed and wound up as it generally was with rare touches of pathos, expressed in the yearning and tremulous tones of his voice, and sometimes too in his tears, hardly any one seemed to leave without being more or less impressed with this, that the man was really in downright earnest for the conversion of souls, and particularly for the conversion of those who might largely be the means of converting others.

"The great day alone will fully declare the good that was done among the *alumni* of our Glasgow University by the burning words of Mr. Brownlow North."

It was several years after this that Mr. North was asked to address the students of the Edinburgh University. During the session already referred to as having been remarkable for a spiritual movement in the Glasgow College, a movement of a similar character, and perhaps still more extensive, had taken place among the students in Aberdeen, under the simple and loving presentation of the gospel by Mr.

Reginald Radcliffe, of Liverpool. As the result of this awakening the students there who had been led to Christ formed a prayer-meeting among themselves in the spring of 1859; and at the opening of the following winter session, if we recollect aright, they sent to the students of the Edinburgh University a very winning and faithful brotherly address, which was printed and circulated largely among us, urging those who were undecided to come to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, and suggesting to those who were on the Lord's side that they should organize prayer-meetings among themselves for the maintenance of their spiritual life, and for the conversion of their fellow-students. Accordingly, a few of us met together, and resolved at once to begin a meeting strictly for prayer and reading of the Scriptures among ourselves. It was begun with much fear and trembling. Most of us were junior students, and had never spoken to one another on the subject of religion at all, far less had we ever engaged in public prayer. We asked Professor Campbell Swinton for the use of the Civil Law class-room, as it was one of the smallest and most suitable for our purpose, and it was at once granted in the kindest manner. The meeting which was held weekly, on Saturday mornings, became a rallying-place for those who were seeking to follow the Lord, and was very helpful to us in the Christian life. Among those who most regularly attended it, and who have since been called to the church of the firstborn above, were such bright

and beautiful Christians as Arthur R. W. Rainey, Andrew Moody-Stuart, and Thomas M. Mure; who were followers of the Lamb, of that pure, healthy, winning, and at the same time decided and manly type of piety which has such a stimulating and helpful influence upon others. Occasionally we asked one of the Professors or one of the ministers in the town to address us.

In the hope of influencing some of the more careless of our fellow-students, Mr. North was asked and agreed to address us on the first Saturday in March, 1862; and as we foresaw that the Civil Law class-room might prove too small, we applied to Professor Miller for the use of his Surgery class-room, which he at once gladly granted to us. Our modest weekly notice of our meeting, this time with the name of Brownlow North on it, attracted attention, and was once or twice torn down. Understanding that opposition was brewing, we sent a deputation to the learned Principal, Sir David Brewster, asking his sanction for the use of the Surgery class-room, which he at once accorded, at the same time warning us that if the matter were brought up in the Senatus, he could not secure us possession of the room, as he had only a casting vote. One or two of the Professors determined to oppose and put down the meeting, and a very hot and acrimonious discussion was held in the Senatus on the subject, some of the members of that grave body being very hostile to the proposed service. The result was, that the defenders of the

interests of the students' prayer-meeting were overborne, and the meeting, which had been intimated with Professor Miller's sanction and the Principal's approval, was interdicted. The lecturers of the Royal College of Surgeons, close to the University, hearing of our repulse, sent over on Thursday, and kindly placed their largest class-room at our disposal. Their offer was most thankfully accepted, and accordingly we assembled there at the appointed hour. We had feared that the meeting after all might be a small one, as the number of really earnest students was few, but the opposition had acted as the best of advertisements, and the class-room was choked to its utmost capacity, many students being unable to gain admittance. In consequence of this, we were obliged once more to adjourn to a neighbouring church (Free Roxburgh), which was opened for us. It had been feared that the speaker's voice might be drowned by such unseemly disturbances of cheering, hooting, and pea-throwing, as often interrupted the Principal in delivering the very valuable and interesting addresses which then graced the opening and the close of each academical session. But even during the impatient interval of waiting in the class-room, there were only one or two faint attempts made to "ruff in" the speaker, which were promptly suppressed by a general hush, and after the address began in the church, the silence and solemnity were complete.

Professor (afterwards Sir James) Simpson took the chair, and was surrounded on the platform by Pro-

fessor Miller, Professor Balfour, Dr. Struthers, Dr. Benjamin Bell, Dr. Scoresby Jackson, Dr. Alexander Simpson, Dr. Coldstream, Dr. Patrick Watson, the Rev. Dr. Guthrie, Rev. Dr. W. L. Alexander, Rev. T. Cochrane, James Cunningham, Esq., George F. Barbour, Esq., etc.

Sir James Simpson, in opening the meeting, explained how a meeting of University undergraduates came to have been convened in the College of Surgeons. He then in a few earnest and thoughtful sentences introduced the preacher. "Why have you asked Mr. Brownlow North to address you? I believe the simple answer to that question is this, that many of you are aware that by God's grace, and under God's hand, Mr. North has been the happy instrument of arousing the attention of many to the important matter of religion; and you students must ever remember that of all truths you have to consider, that is the most tremendous, because it bears not only on the concerns of this life, but on your joy or misery, your salvation or ruin through eternity. Mr. North has been blessed in an extraordinary manner, in expounding the doctrine of our redemption by Jesus Christ, a doctrine, which is perhaps rejected by many because it is in itself so essentially simple. Let me add, that Mr. North, as a lay-preacher, has perhaps some advantages over more professional preachers; for we do know that a kind of conventional language is sometimes employed by the regular clergy, which perhaps injures the efficacy of their

preaching." He then read a passage from Dr. Chalmers' Lectures on Divinity, in which he quoted with assent a remark of his departed friend Robert Hall, that the majority of evangelical ministers do not know how to lay down the gospel so that a man of plain and ordinary understanding should know how to take it up.

After prayer by Dr. Guthrie, Mr. North rose and gave an account of his own conversion, in the words in which it has been recorded in our opening chapter, and then delivered a very impressive address from Psalm cxix. 9, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy word." The impression produced was deep and solemn, and we cannot doubt, bore lasting fruit. Certainly many students found great help from his clear and decided teaching, during that and other winters in Edinburgh, and could give testimony similar to that of the Rev. Robert Howie, so prominent in the great work of Church extension in Glasgow, who writes, "I remember well how deeply I was impressed when as a student I heard him for the first time. He made me feel as if I were moving among unseen realities, and on each successive occasion as I listened to his appeals I derived a similar benefit to my own soul."

The Rev. Dr. W. P. Mackay, of Hull, widely known by his very useful publications and his evangelistic labours, writes:—

"Personally, I owe him a great deal. When I was a

student, shortly after my conversion, and when thinking of, but not decided for the ministry, I used to go to hear him preach whenever he was in Edinburgh. One afternoon he was preaching in your father's pulpit to a crowded audience. I remember the seat in which I sat in the top gallery; I forget text, sermon, everything but one expression, one I have often heard from him since, but which had not struck me before. In his own emphatic, burning, irresistible, pithy style, he said, 'If God's word says one thing, and your heart says another, call your heart a liar, and believe God.' I sat and pondered over these words, and they opened up quite a fresh line of things to me."

Dr. Mackay mentions that the fourth chapter of his book, "Grace and Truth," (now circulated in a dozen different languages,) was the fruit of the above sentence of Brownlow North's. The title of the chapter, to the usefulness of which Dr. Mackay has received many testimonies, is "Do you feel your sins forgiven?"

Ten years later, in May, 1873, he addressed the undergraduates of Cambridge University. None but University men were admitted, and it was said that about a fourth of the whole University attended. There was every evidence of a deep impression, and he gave away to the students one hundred copies of his "Earnest Words," and about twenty copies of "Ourselves," which were all that he had with him.

We shall now turn from reviewing his addresses to crowded meetings of University men, and record the results of a visit to one of our most esteemed Scotch noble families, that of the Earl of Aberdeen.

The recollections are kindly given by the Dowager-Countess of Aberdeen.

VISIT TO HADDO HOUSE IN 1863.

The following note was written after the close of his visit by the late Earl of Aberdeen, Jan. 5th, 1863.

"MY DEAR MRS. NORTH,—In your unfortunate but necessary absence, which I much regret, I cannot forbear writing to tell you how much we have enjoyed your husband's kind visit. I hope that he may not have over-exerted himself during his stay here. He has preached several magnificent sermons in our little country churches, and it would be difficult to describe the impression he has made on all who have heard him. Indeed, as a public speaker, and as an example of pulpit eloquence, I know of none who surpasses him. His voice and delivery are truly admirable, and the affectionate earnestness of his manner is irresistibly winning, while his practical knowledge of the subject and powers of lively and clear illustration give to his words a force and weight which it would be difficult to over-estimate. I am sure that my family and I have great cause to be grateful for the good he has done us, and we are most anxious that you should use your influence and get him to spare himself for the sake of others as well as his own, and to take care of his health which he is so ready to neglect, and to prevent his wearing himself out in doing good to others. With kind regards from Lady Aberdeen,

"I remain, yours very truly,

"ABERDEEN."

Regarding the same visit this nobleman's widow writes to Mr. James Balfour:—

"17, CROMWELL ROAD, S.W., *Jan. 22nd*, 1878.

"DEAR MR. BALFOUR,—Our first acquaintance with Mr.

North was at Keith Hall, in December, 1862. My husband and I went from Haddo House to spend the day with Lord and Lady Kintore, and I well remember how they and Mr. North united with us in prayer for our eldest son, who had just come of age. Mr. North came to stay on a visit to us about the end of the month. My husband was anxious to promote his usefulness in the neighbourhood, and did all he could to arrange meetings in the district as well as in the house. The most notable of these was one held at the Free Church, Methlic, on the last night of the year. He spoke with great earnestness and power, and at the close, when all left the church, those who wished for special prayer on their behalf, that they might then decide for God, were invited to return. You may suppose how anxiously we waited, and with what joy we saw our sons come back into the church. Their hearts had been previously touched and their consciences awakened by the words spoken both in public and private by their cousin, Walter Scott, and this evening seemed to be the turning-point. The following morning we all met in Mr. North's sitting-room, when he read Isa. lv., and spoke in a very affecting, solemn manner, and then he and each of them prayed in turn. There was at that time a great interest in religious subjects, a sort of "revival" throughout the whole household; but whether the impression was permanent in any case except in our own family, I cannot say.

Mr. North returned at the end of January, to be present at the marriage of our eldest daughter and her cousin, Walter Scott (now Lord Polwarth), and afterwards visited us again during that year, the last of my husband's life. My husband had a very sincere regard, and I may say a warm affection for him, and, as you know, joined most heartily in the plan for providing him with a place of repose to which he might occasionally retire from his laborious

work, which was afterwards carried out in the purchase of the 'Knoll.' At the same time he saw very clearly, and deeply regretted, some weaknesses in his character which he thought injured his usefulness, and did not hesitate to tell him his opinion; but he did this so gently and tenderly, that Mr. North, far from taking his faithfulness amiss, expressed his gratitude to him for having spoken so plainly, and their friendship continued unaltered to the last. I once, with my daughter, spent some days at the 'Knoll,' with Mr. and Mrs. North, who received us with warm-hearted hospitality. Of late years I saw but little of Mr. North; but on the occasion of his last visit to Haddo House, in the autumn of 1873, I was struck with the mellowed, subdued, and very spiritual tone of his mind. He seemed both more heavenly-minded and more humble than ever before, and though in weak health, and suffering from other causes of depression, he was still full of sympathy for the sorrows and trials of his friends, and I feel sure that he never failed to remember them in prayer.

In speaking of his first visit, I might have mentioned an example of the way in which he turned the subject of common conversation to advantage. He had been asking about Egypt, where we had recently spent some months, and inquiring what the effect on our minds was of seeing those remains of so remote an antiquity. He then said, 'How strange to think that Moses probably saw some of these very temples and palaces in all their glory, and how astonishing it must have seemed to the courtiers of Pharaoh when he declared himself, instead of being the son of Pharaoh's daughter, to be one of the Hebrews, and announced his intention of casting in his lot with that despised race of slaves! They probably did not believe him at first, then thought him mad, and when they saw that he was firm in his resolution, they utterly scorned and hated him.

Yet now there are only some ruins left—the very names of the kings who reigned there forgotten and lost for ever, while the name of Moses is known, and will be honoured as long as the world lasts. And why? Because "he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; for he had respect to the recompence of reward." He has been enjoying that reward now for nearly three thousand years, *and it has only just begun.*' The way in which he spoke these words is distinctly present to my mind even now. I never heard anything more impressive, and yet it came in simply and naturally in the course of our conversation.

"Believe me, yours very truly,

"M. ABERDEEN."

The reader will recall the beautiful letter from one of the brothers here referred to, given on pp. 184-187.

Mr. North was in very many cases useful to those who have since in a public capacity proved a means of blessing to others. The Rev. Robert Howie of Glasgow says, "On making inquiry, I have been particularly struck by the numbers of those now taking a prominent part in evangelistic work who speak of Mr. North as the means, in the hand of the Divine Spirit, of their conversion."

We have already seen that he was blessed among students, and we may also state that at least in several cases he was made the instrument of the conversion of ministers in the charge of souls, who had been preaching a Saviour of whom personally they had no knowledge.

Work in Free St. Luke's, Edinburgh.

Winter after winter following on his first visit to Edinburgh in 1857, Mr. North preached in Free St. Luke's Church, and was made the means of blessing to many souls within its walls. Many of those to whom he was blessed were regular adherents of the congregation, but many also belonged to different congregations and denominations in the city. The church, located in a central situation in the new town, and seating, when all the galleries are thrown open, nearly 1,500 people, was peculiarly well adapted for such audiences as Mr. North attracted to it; while the fact that the congregation contained a large number of very devoted and experienced Christian people, who gave themselves to earnest wrestling with the great Master of assemblies for a blessing on the word published by His servant, furnishes a key to explain the abundant blessing which descended upon this place of worship, which had previously, under the rich and searching ministrations of the stated pastor, Dr. Moody-Stuart, been made the birthplace of many souls. A lady, who has long carried on a good work in the Female Industrial Home at Corstorphine, had asked Mr. North to go out and address the inmates in the year 1863, when he was holding services in St. Luke's. On the day and hour fixed, the coachman who had been sent to convey him there at two o'clock one Saturday returned with an empty carriage, and a message to say he was sorry to disappoint his

friends, but the Lord had given him work in town, and there were so many anxious souls calling to converse with him, that he dared not come away and leave them. About seventy anxious inquirers had called to see him that Saturday forenoon. Next day he apologised to Miss Maitland for his failure to fulfil his engagement, and said, I don't know how it was, but it was something I had said on Friday evening about 'grace and peace' that broke them down. I had said, "You are all wanting peace, but you won't humble yourselves to take grace; but remember, grace and peace are just like the steam-engine and the train, attached the one to the other; the engine *must* go first, and then the train follows: you must have grace, the forgiveness of sin, *or you can never have true peace.*"

We shall here give in his own words the experience of one who received a blessing from the message of this preacher in this church.

"I was a boy of about sixteen years of age when I heard Mr. North for the first time. Years have passed since then, but I remember distinctly his voice and appearance, and indeed almost all the circumstances of that summer evening service in Free St. Luke's. His address was the most solemn I had ever heard, and it produced a deep impression upon me. Had he actually been within the pearly gates of the celestial city, had he seen with those solemn eyeballs the dread abode of the doomed, the pictures he drew could not have seemed more real, nor the earnestness of his appeals been greater. The language, which was unmistak-

ably that of conviction, was rendered more forcible by his manner of delivery. Not only his voice, but every feature of his face, revealed the urgency of his message. I had never doubted that there were such places as heaven and hell, yet I had never so far believed in them as to let their existence affect my life. At the conclusion of that address, I believed that hell existed, and I further believed that I was in danger of going there. An aunt who was with me (she had persuaded me to go that evening) noticed that I did not look quite as usual, and asked if I should like to see Mr. North. I said, 'Yes, I should;' and it was arranged that I should see him the following day. If the evening before I had been awed by his solemnity, this time I was touched by his kindness and his solicitude about my soul. He seemed more anxious about it than I was myself. He spent some little time in explaining my difficulties, then he prayed with me, evincing at every stage such a sense of the preciousness of my soul, as was new and striking to me. The apprehension of the dangers and temptations he foresaw I should be exposed to, seemed to affect him much. When we rose from our knees, he embraced me tenderly, and I left him, thanking God for the opportunity He had given me."

This gentleman is now engaged abroad in arduous and successful work for the Saviour.

Visits to Durie House, Fifeshire.

Mr. North on several occasions visited the late Charles Christie, Esq., of Durie, and of these visits Miss Christie kindly sends the following recollections:—

"Mr. North on several occasions visited our country

home, and preached in various places around. A brother of ours, who had been seeking the Lord for some time, received much blessing, and wrote to a friend that Mr. North 'had helped him to a clear view of the imputed righteousness.' A warm friendship followed between them. In grateful affection he used to call him 'Bishop North.'

A lady was much struck by his inquiring of her, 'How many have you led to Jesus Christ since you were brought to Him yourself?' And another, after hearing him preach, wrote thus, 'I feel like a horse with the spur in his side ever since I heard Mr. North.' More than one of our servants was seriously impressed; and we recall also how earnestly he sought to improve the occasion to us all, when a dear relative of ours was suddenly called away by death.

He took an interest in an old gentleman whom he met at this time. Perceiving that of him it might be said, 'One thing thou lackest,' Mr. North attempted first to reach him by faithful conversation in the family circle; this was highly resented, however: he next sent him one of his own tracts by a member of the family, for the old gentleman would scarce deign to speak to him. This was read, and afterwards he changed his tone, and became quite friendly with Mr. North. The grave offence he took at first at his outspoken faithfulness, and then the conviction that he was right, were truly a striking testimony. To a young lady, beautiful and fashionable, he said, 'You must come out of the world with a crash!' Other instances there were during his stay in our house, when with a rare faithfulness and courage he spoke just *the word* that his keen discernment told him was needed, whether to those older or younger than himself. Remarking on worldly conformity, he said, 'People come and ask me, "Is it wrong to go to balls?" and so on. I look on the question another way, and ask, "Is this the way in which I can most profitably spend my time?" *that* is the

question for the servants of the Lord.' He spoke most warmly of the exceeding value of gospel teaching for the young, 'that when the Spirit comes they may know what to do.' 'Where would I have been,' he said, 'when I became alarmed about my soul, but for my dear mother's teaching? She always prayed for me, and always believed that I should be brought to the Lord.' In our family circle his presence was so genial that he became a centre of attraction to young and old, sharing in the cheerful scenes of the Christmas season with a kindly warmth, riding out in the country with us, or joining in croquet on the lawn with a zest that added to our enjoyment.

His faithfulness and fervour we cannot forget, and with this is entwined the recollection of a frank and cordial kindliness that must ever endear his memory."

The narrative now given of his way of improving visits of a social and friendly kind is only a fair sample of Mr. North's use and wont in redeeming the time. Another correspondent writes, "In private life I never saw him 'off duty;' he was always ready to say a word in season. Where his geniality opened the way, his watchful fidelity seized many an opportunity of winning a soul." It may also be mentioned that not only did he never on any occasion omit family worship and exposition in his own house, whatever company he might have at dinner, but that when away from home, staying in hotels or lodgings, he always told the landlord or landlady that he had worship at a certain hour, and that he would be happy if they, their servants, or visitors, would join him in his room at that time. These invitations used to be

gratefully accepted, and good was done in several instances through this instrumentality. Only a month or two before his death, his family worship was made a means of blessing to one if not two of the daughters of his landlady in a sea-coast town, where he was staying in lodgings.

The partial or entire neglect of family worship is one of the most ominous symptoms of the low ebb to which religion has receded among many professors in our land. No means can be named which has been more blessed to produce saving impression among the young than the daily assemblings at the household altar to offer the sacrifices of praise and prayer, and to read together the Word of Life. It was as a family institution that the worship of God flourished in patriarchal days. It nursed the flame of piety in Scotland a century ago, when Moderatism held possession of our pulpits.

Multitudes of calls, and crowded halls and churches, never led Mr. North to neglect the simplest means of communicating the knowledge of Christ, such means as are within the reach of the humblest follower of the Lamb.

REMARKABLE CASES OF IMPRESSION AND CONVERSION.

"In the still air the music lies unheard ;
In the rough marble beauty hides unseen :
To wake the music and the beauty needs
The master's touch, the sculptor's chisel keen.
Great Master, touch us with Thy skilful hand ;
Let not the music that is in us die !
Great Sculptor, hew and polish us ; nor let
Hidden and lost Thy form within us lie ! " ANON.

"Behold me, and the children whom the Lord hath given me."—ISA. viii. 18.

XIII.

NOT a few of the cases in which Mr. North was made instrumental in awakening sinners to a sense of their danger, in detecting the delusions or errors that were keeping them from the enjoyment of peace, in leading them to the great Saviour, or to entrance into the full light and liberty of the children of God, were of a remarkable character. A narrative of some of these may prove useful to others. Cases, the idiosyncrasy of which appears striking, often turn out on closer study to be typical, and to bear a representative character. Even where this is not so, their recital may serve to exalt our ideas of the attractiveness of Christ, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the fertility of resource employed by Him in arresting and saving those who are going down to destruction.

THE TEACHER'S DAUGHTER.

Mary Ann Whyte was the daughter of a schoolmaster in Invernessshire, who died before she reached her eighteenth year, rejoicing in the Saviour who had redeemed her by His blood, and enlightened her by His Spirit. She had been religiously trained, and had not been without spiritual impressions, and for

nearly a year, ever since the death of her mother, she had been seeking Christ. It was in this state of mind that she heard Brownlow North preach on one occasion in Inverness. Referring to that occasion, she said, "I can tell you the time and place when and where Christ manifested His love to me, and caused me to love Him with an everlasting love; that was the evening on which I heard Mr. North in Inverness: his text was, 'Wilt thou go with this man?' (Gen. xxiv. 58.) I thought when he was, in the course of his sermon, opening up the character of the Man Jesus, and showing forth His matchless love to fallen sinners, that my heart was correspondingly opening; but when, in the application, he called out as with the voice of God, 'Here, here! The Lord of heaven, the wonder of angels, the delight of saints, and desire of nations is now offering Himself freely to you as your all in all for time and eternity. O will you take Him, *take Him*, TAKE HIM? This may be the last offer you may have of Him. Will you let Him go? O don't!'—I thought my soul was one flame of love to Him. I would not, I could not, I did not let Him go. I know those who were about me were noticing my state; but I could not contain myself. I was overcome with love—love that constrained me to love Him, and since then till now, and, I believe, to all eternity, I can think of none but Himself. Oh, His love is written deep here (laying her hand on her heart), and as a token of His love to me He will soon

grant me my desire, and that is, that where He is, there I may be also."

She frequently reverted to that day of her espousals, and wondered if there could be one soul *there* that could let such a glorious offer pass. The last time she was out at church, that sermon was her theme going and returning. She cherished the most Christian affection for Mr. North, although she never saw nor heard him afterwards. When asked if she was sure she loved Christ, she replied with much animation, "I am as sure of that—yea, He has made me sure of it—as sure as that I say it—yea, surer; for," she continued, laying her hand on her heart, "He has written it here." On her deathbed her soul was burning with two desires, that she might get home to the full enjoyment of her Lord, and that all mankind might partake of Jesus' love. She often said of the Saviour, "Oh, Love of heaven, who can but love Thee? art not Thou altogether lovely?" Her grand source of help and comfort was the Bible and the Saviour of the Bible. On her father's asking her how she got such a remarkable insight into the meaning of God's Word as she displayed, she said, "Whosoever takes the key, Christ, can understand the Bible." When drawing near her end, she suffered somewhat from a natural fear of death; but recovered herself and said, "Oh, I see it now. My own dear Jesus has the keys of death and hell, to give me an easy passage through the one, and to lock the cowardly enemy into the other. Alas, that I should

so forget my Key!" A few days before her death she was asked, "Would you now dare venture to depart, grounding upon that joyful frame?" "On nothing but Christ, on none but Christ," she replied: "frames and feelings are sweet, but trusting in them would be like *fixing the anchor in the ship instead of on the rock*." On the Friday before she died, hearing that Mr. North was in Nairn, she longed to see him again, and on being told that he would not be there for a fortnight, she said to her father, "I will then be in glory; but never mind, I shall soon see him there; yet, if you see him, tell him of my case to encourage him to spend and to be spent in declaring to all the overcoming love of Jesus."*

The Rev. Andrew A. Bonar, D.D., of Glasgow, who is known to all the churches of Christ in English-speaking lands as the biographer of his bosom friend the Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne, as well as by his other numerous and valuable publications, has kindly communicated to us the following interesting case which came under his notice in his own congregation, and which took place at Mr. North's first visit to Glasgow.

The Silent Inquirer.

Under his preaching in Finnieston Free Church, a young woman was awakened, one who had been well

* The narrative from which, by the publisher's kind permission, we make the above extracts, is published as a tract by Peter Drummond, Stirling, with the above title, and will well repay perusal. (No. 636.)

taught and was outwardly blameless. Her conviction of sin was very deep; she was weighed down under the burden. One evening she sought out the house where Mr. North was staying, and asked to see him. She was at once taken to him, and sitting down near him she covered her face with her hand, not uttering one word. Mr. North waited, expecting that she would speak; but all was silence, tears running down her cheeks, and her whole demeanour conveying the impression that she was in profound concern. Still not a word escaped her lips. Mr. North began to try to draw out her mind for her, by such remarks as, "I suppose you are anxious?" "I suppose you have come to speak with me because you are anxious?" But still there was no response. He then said, "You know I can be of no use to you if I do not know your state of mind. Tell me something of what you feel." Even now no reply came, and Mr. North gazed for a minute at the figure before him—a most earnest inquirer, her face buried in her hand, and her frame full of emotion. At length he resumed his attempt to fathom her state of mind. "I need not try to speak to you unless you speak to me. I must just let you go away. But at least answer me this question, *Do you believe there is a God?*" When he had pressed this question, the hand fell from the face, and then he got this reply, "Sir, if I did not believe there was a God, I would not be anxious about my soul!" Mr. North at once responded, "Oh, now I understand you. You are troubled because you have

to do with God—God, who is a holy and a just God. Let us speak of this." The ice was broken; he had got a look into her heart and conscience, and she was led on to indicate more; nor was it long before she had seen that 'God is in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself,' and that God accepts the sinner who accepts the Beloved Son in whom He is well pleased.

Given up by the Lord.

Dr. Samuel Miller, to whom we are already indebted for an account of a striking conversion, has recalled another interesting case. On one occasion when Mr. North was staying in Glasgow, and had been preaching for him in Free St. Matthew's Church, he came one afternoon into Dr. Miller's study, and asked him to go out with him for a walk, as he was very much tired and fagged. On Dr. Miller's inquiring what had worn him out, he said that he had been engaged all day in seeing persons in private who were in a state of spiritual concern, and had just finished a conversation with a lady, which had lasted for an hour and a half. On Dr. Miller's inquiring what was the nature of her difficulty, Mr. North said that she had been in the deepest distress, saying that the Lord had given her up. "Well, and did she find peace at last?" "Yes, she did, and it was from what I said to her almost at random." "What was that?" "Well, her burden was that the Lord had given her up, and would not hear her prayer. So I asked her, 'Are you a believer? Have you placed your trust in

Christ?' 'Yes.' 'And the Lord has given you up?' 'Yes.' 'Then either you or He must be a liar. Are you telling me a lie just now, when you say you have placed your trust in Christ?' 'No, certainly not.' 'Then the Lord must be a liar; and in that case, if I were you, I would give Him up.' 'Oh, but I can't give Him up, sir.' 'Why not, if He is a liar?' 'I can't give Him up.' 'Ah!' I said, 'that is because the Lord has not given you up. It's because He is keeping hold of you.'" These words were the means of at once bringing her to peace.

One of Mr. North's characteristics was great shrewdness and quickness of perception, which both kept him from being easily deceived as to the character and condition of those who came to open their mind to him, and enabled him to adapt his counsel to the spiritual state of each soul.

The next case is one which occurred early in Mr. North's ministry, and one to which he often referred.

Why did God permit Sin?

At the close of one of his services in Edinburgh, a young man asked to speak with him, and was admittted to the side-room, where he was meeting with anxious inquirers. Addressing Mr. North, he said, "I have heard your sermon, sir, and I have heard you preach often, now; and I neither care for you nor your preaching, unless you can tell me, why did God permit sin in the world?" "Then I'll tell you," the preacher at once replied; "God permitted

sin, because He chose to do so." The man was taken aback by the ready retort, which threw no light on the subject of his question, and yet expressed all the conclusion which the deepest thinkers on that mysterious subject have been able to arrive at, referring it as an unsolved enigma to the Divine good pleasure, which permitted it for reasons altogether wise, but not revealed to us, and to a large extent inscrutable. "Because He chose it," he repeated, as the objector stood speechless, and added, "If you continue to question and cavil at God's dealings, and vainly puffed up by your carnal mind strive to be wise above what is written, I will tell you something more that God will choose to do. He will some day choose to put you into hell. It is vain, sir, for man to strive with his Maker: you cannot resist Him; and neither your opinion of His dealings, nor your blasphemous expression of them, will in the least lessen the pain of your everlasting damnation, which will most certainly be your portion if you go on in your present spirit. There were such questioners as you in Paul's time, and what the Apostle said to them I say to you, 'Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?'" The young man interrupted him, and asked, "Is there such a text, sir, as that in the Bible?" "Yes, there is in the ninth chapter of Romans; and I recommend you to go home and read that chapter, and after you have read it, and learned from His own word that God claims for Himself the right to do whatever He chooses, and does not permit the

thing formed to say to Him that formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus?—to remember that, besides permitting sin, there is another thing God has chosen to do—*God chose to send Jesus.*" He then in a few words pointed out to him the way of salvation both from sin and wrath which God had prepared of His own free and sovereign will, and urged him to embrace it.

The following Friday, when sitting in my father's drawing-room, the servant announced that a young man wanted to speak to him. On being shown upstairs, he asked Mr. North if he remembered him, but he could not recall who he was. "Do you not remember the young man who on Sunday night asked you to tell him why God permitted sin?" "Yes, perfectly." "Well, sir, I am that young man; and you said that God permitted sin because He chose it, and you told me to go home and read the ninth chapter of Romans, and you also told me that God chose to send Jesus to die for such sinners as I was, and I went home and did, sir, what you told me." He said he had gone home, and after reading that chapter, which so many find a stumbling-block, he had pleaded for pardon in the name of Jesus, and for the gift of the Holy Spirit to be his teacher, and was afterwards enabled to believe that he had been heard and forgiven, and now he said, "I am happy, oh, so happy, sir; and though the devil comes sometimes to tempt me with my old thoughts, and to ask me what *reason* I have to think God has forgiven me,

I have always managed to get him away by telling him that I do not want to judge things any longer by my own reason but by God's word, and that the only reason why I know I am forgiven is that, for Christ's sake, God chooses to pardon me."

Mr. North added that the changed expression of the young man's countenance was enough to account for his not knowing him again, as it was radiant with joy and peace. Mr. James Balfour of Edinburgh narrated this incident, of which Mr. North had given him the particulars, to Principal Cunningham shortly after its occurrence. He listened with deep attention and interest, and said, "That shows me North knows what he is about."*

Miss Maitland, a lady long well known in Edinburgh for her successful philanthropic and Christian work, has kindly communicated the particulars of the two following cases :—

Are you willing to Give up the World?

Mr. North came to luncheon with us in the country. He was living at a friend's house near Scotscraig. He told us that he had had an intimation of a death that morning, and then he gave us the following particulars of this young lady's conversion. She had been one who came for conversation at the house referred to. He said, whenever she entered the room, her appearance impressed him

* See Mr. North's tract, "God chose to send Jesus."

that she was not thoroughly in earnest for salvation, so he just said, "Madam, are you willing to give up the world for Christ?" "Oh, no," she said, "I cannot say that; but what you said last night has troubled me and made me somewhat anxious." "Oh, madam," said he, "it would be mockery for you to go to the Lord Jesus, and say to Him, you want Him to come and dwell in your heart when there is anything else you are preferring to Him. I could not, I dare not, pray with you in these circumstances." She rose and turned haughtily, but sadly, to go away. "Think," he said to her as she was going towards the door, "what these idols, that you are now preferring to Christ, can do for you at your dying hour; and remember, I will be delighted to see you back again when you have decided to take Christ as your Lord and Saviour." She left, and he said he scarcely expected to see her again, for she was young and handsome, and it was something for her to give up the world. Four days afterwards the door opened, and the same lady appeared, but so pale and broken-down-like, that he scarcely knew her. "Oh, Mr. North, I have had an awful struggle, a terrible time since I saw you. I have just come to ask whether you think Christ will take me." "It was easy work then," he said, "so we went to the Lord, and got the matter settled. At the former visit the question was, would she take Christ? no, she was not willing to do that; but when the question came to be, was the Lord willing to take her, as a poor hell-deserving

sinner? then all the difficulty was removed, for Jesus Christ came to save sinners." About a week after this, Mr. North met her in the street, her face beaming with joy. "I was just coming to tell you," she said, "what joy and peace I have found in believing. I had more pleasure in an hour's communion with my dear Lord last night, than ever I had in all the pleasures of the world put together." She joined the weekly class for Bible instruction, and was known to some of our young friends attending it as a consistent Christian, and as an earnest, devoted student of the Word. When Mr. North finished the little narrative, he said, "It is her death that I have an intimation of this morning. A friend writes that she was taken suddenly ill, had burst a blood-vessel, and died in about ten minutes. Oh," he continued, "was it not well for her that she had chosen Christ and not the world as her portion?"

Would you Sell Christ for £10,000?

Not long since, a lady came to me in much anxiety, with this complaint: "Mr. North, it is said, 'Unto you who believe He is precious.' Now, I am afraid He is not precious to me, so I cannot be a believer." "Well, madam," said I, (for I knew her very well,) "you are not very rich; if He is not precious to you, would you sell Him for ten thousand pounds?" "Oh, Mr. North, how could you propose such a thing? I would not part with Him for the whole world." "Then, madam, He is precious to you." So the

dear soul went away comforted, to think He was much more precious to her than she had been aware of, till this strange proposal was made to her.

The next narrative is that of the conversion of a young woman, named Marianne——.

The Story of Marianne.

Marianne was wont to be thoughtless, giddy, and merry-hearted, full of youthful frolic and nonsense, enjoying the vanities, follies, and pleasures of the world. But at the same time she maintained a respectable form of religion, and thought herself not worse than her neighbours.

About two years before her conversion, she was much impressed by a remarkable dream. She dreamed that she was seated on a jutting point of rock, near a hill-top. She was in great terror, for the stone on which she sat was rocking, and there was a bottomless abyss below. On the top stood the Lord Jesus, whom she entreated to help her out of her perilous situation; but He only shook His head, as if He said emphatically, No! She cried, "Oh, take me up." He again refused. She remembered no more, until she found herself in heaven, among legions of holy angels; and the Lord again appeared, and as He passed gave an approving smile, and said, "You're come." Her soul warmed towards Him as He passed. She thought this dream was a warning from God that she should leave her

folly; and it made a temporary impression, which by-and-by wore away.

About a year afterwards, she was spending a Friday evening thoughtlessly in the theatre, when the above dream rushed into her mind, and terrified her. On the Lord's-day following, a companion asked her to go and hear Mr. Brownlow North preach. She had intended to go out to walk; but it rained, and she went to church. His text was, "Wilt thou go with this man?" She was struck to the heart by the discourse, and burst into tears when she heard the words, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." As she was going home, she told her friend that she felt herself a lost sinner. He said that it was all excitement, and she should not go back or listen to Mr. North any more. She felt that what had been said was all true, and that she was righteously condemned by the holy law of God, and she defended Mr. North's preaching.

For three days she was in deep distress, and those about her wondered at her unwonted dulness and seriousness, and asked her what was the matter? They were continually trying to divert her attention, and one of the girls took her round the waist, and said, "Marianne, come away, and cheer up, and let us have a laugh as we used to have." "But, oh, I feel I am a lost sinner," said she; "and how can I be happy?" "Never mind," said they; "you should come away, and cheer up, and try to enjoy yourself." She listened to their enticing words, and went with

them, although much against her conscience. They sang the cheerful song, and raised the merry laugh, and tried to charm away the melancholy of Marianne's soul, and, sad to say, they succeeded. The Holy Spirit was quenched, and she had no more spiritual anxiety for the next twelve months.

Mr. North returned to Edinburgh, and preached again, in another church, on "Wilt thou go with this man?" Marianne heard him, and her anxiety of soul returned with redoubled force. Her feelings overcame her, and she cried out in church, and flung her head on the book-board in great agony of mind. She spoke to Mr. North at the second meeting; but was too much agitated to listen to a single word of what was spoken to her, and went home in despair. In the morning she went as usual to her work, but was in such agony of mind that she could scarcely do anything but weep. For seven days there was hardly a word spoken in the work-room, but an awfully solemn impression rested on all about her. Not being able to restrain her feelings one day, she retired into another apartment to weep and cry for mercy. On her return she cried aloud, "O Lord, will you not hear my cry?" and turning to those around her, she asked, with impassioned eagerness, "Is there none here who can speak to me about Jesus?"

They were all professors; but they made no reply. She thought that she would be obliged to give up her situation, if her prayers remained unanswered;

for she was quite unfit to do anything, her soul's anguish was so dreadful, and she feared she would go deranged. She knew salvation was in the Bible, and she must get it there, but, although she sought for it, she could not find it.

Her sister, on coming in and seeing her one day weeping and in great distress, asked her if she had had a letter that their brother was dead. "No," she replied; "but I'm dead myself—I'm lost!" When left alone she fell before her Bible, which was open at St. John, third chapter; a blindness came over her, and she cried out in agony, "O blessed Jesus, give me sight to see." At that moment she felt a sensation as if a hand were removing her burden of sin. Then, in a sort of vision, she beheld the Saviour in three positions—extended on the cross, kneeling in prayer, and then in glorious white garments smiling upon her. Her joy was now so great, that she felt as if she could have laughed and wept at the same time, but could do neither. But on her knees she burst out into earnest thanksgiving and praise, and then cried to the Lord for the salvation of her relatives and friends; and her sister coming in, she dragged her down upon her knees, that she might get saved too. Jeannie said, "There's a time for everything, and you are going too far with your religion;" but she knelt, and after prayer left in silence. Jeannie was impressed by it, but was not brought to the Lord at that time.

Marianne had now passed from death unto life.

She had obtained pardon of sin and the peace of God, and she felt joyful and happy. Her bodily health returned, and she resumed her employment. But on hearing the trifling conversation of those about her respecting ministers and sermons, and feeling that all their talk was soulless and empty, she could not help crying out in the work-room among them, "O fools, what if your souls should be required of you while you are talking about religion, and forgetting the name of Jesus? I have found Him, and He is my Saviour." Two girls were so much impressed by what she said, that they left the room in tears. And as she continued to talk to her fellow-workers of the precious Redeemer from day to day, one said, "Oh, this is miserable! I'm going to give in my warning on Saturday, for I cannot bear this." Another said, "All our pleasure is gone now, since Marianne has become serious." But twelve of them were somewhat awakened, and some of them gave evidence of being truly converted. Mr. North exhorted her to live and work for Jesus, and she commenced at once, and went on working for the Lord Jesus with all her might, and He greatly blessed her efforts.

Mr. Radcliffe was preaching on the street near Holyrood Palace one night, and at the close invited the people to accompany him into a neighbouring church. Marianne was there giving tracts to the people in the street, and entreating them to go and hear the gospel. A group of careless, hard-visaged

men rudely refused; and she stood pleading with them, and weeping as she spoke. As the tears rushed from her eyes, she wiped them away with the skirt of her dress, and continued to urge them to come in. A Christian man standing near was so overcome by seeing her deep religious feeling, and burning zeal for Christ, and compassion for souls, that he said to his wife, "I cannot stand this any longer. I *must* go and help this dear girl with these hardened men;" and he went up to them, and said, "My friends, if you don't listen now to these entreaties, and go and hear the message of salvation; if you live and die unsaved, you will hear this girl's earnest words rolling across the 'gulf' in your ears when you are in hell; and then you will wish you had gone with her to hear the gospel that was able to save your souls;" and in words of similar import he continued to warn them, and prevailed.

What effect this had on these men we know not; but the earnest creature's tears and entreaties had a very powerful influence on this Christian brother, and they were the seeds of the "Carrubber's Close Mission," a mission that was blessed to many souls.

Marianne was there almost every night for twelve months; and received grace to lead many souls to Christ. Mr. Jenkinson said quaintly to a lady one day, after the work had gone on for a long time, "She *sews* all day, and *reaps* all night, and she is sure to kill herself; for her zeal for the glory of Jesus and the salvation of souls is consuming her."

The lady had it laid upon her heart to employ her as a missionary, in which work she was much blessed, and she is now, we understand, the wife of a minister of the gospel in England.*

Awakening of an Italian Roman Catholic.

In very many instances Mr. North's tracts and books have been remarkably blessed to persons who had never listened to his earnest and thrilling *vivâ voce* appeals. His tract, elsewhere alluded to, "You are Immortal," had been translated into Italian. A lady whom Mr. North was acquainted with, was at a pension in Switzerland, and she was in the habit of distributing tracts on leaving any place, as she bade adieu to those whose acquaintance she had formed. At the pension where she had been residing was a gentleman, an Italian refugee, and she gave him a tract, which happened to be Mr. North's "Tu sei Immortale." After she had gone, the gentleman wrote to her, enclosing a letter for her to send to the author or authoress of the tract she had given him. She translated the letter, and forwarded it to Mr. North, and in it the writer said, that if what the author taught there was the truth, he must be in error, and if it were so proved, he could not longer remain in the Church of Rome, and begging for more instruction. Miss Gordon, of Wardhouse, who

* As the above narrative, which appeared originally in "The British Herald," has been long out of print, we have reproduced the leading points of it here, with the kind permission of the author.

was visiting Mr. North at the time, at the Knoll, Elgin, asked him to show her his answer; but it was gone, and he told her he had said little, only referring him to passages of Scripture, and naming the chapters that were most likely to help him, with prayer for the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

This incident recalls another of a somewhat similar character.

The Young Prussian.

When Mrs. Moody-Stuart, of Edinburgh, happened to be for a short time in Schwalbach in the summer of 1865, a young Prussian gentleman who was residing there, and whose father held a high office in connection with the Prussian Court, asked to be introduced to her. On making her acquaintance, he explained that the reason he was very anxious to know her was, that he understood she was well acquainted with Mr. Brownlow North, and that as Mr. North was not himself there at that time, he was desirous to meet with one who knew him well. He spoke and read English correctly, and stated that a short time before he had been staying in lodgings, where he found one of Mr. North's tracts, which had been left behind by an English family, and which had been the means, under God, either of awakening him, or of bringing him to the knowledge of Christ Jesus, and the way of salvation in Him.

His father was sceptical in his views, his mother a bigoted Roman Catholic, and the young man, who was possessed of large means, had a great desire to

come to Scotland to meet the man whose words had proved such a blessing to his soul, and to enjoy the spiritual privileges which he heard were so abundant in that favoured land. His history was followed for some time, and he seemed really to have dedicated himself to the Lord.

The Dutch Ambassador.

In order to recruit from the effects of overwork in the midst of his arduous labours, Mr. North was ordered by his medical advisers, on one or two successive seasons, to try the waters and baths of Schwalbach. As he was never idle, but was always engaged in actively serving the Lord, except when quite prostrated, he took the opportunity of giving one or more addresses to the numerous English visitors, and foreigners who understood English, who frequented that fashionable watering-place. On one of these occasions, he gave his address on Gen. xxiv. 58, "Wilt thou go with this man?" Among other notabilities who were present was the Dutch ambassador to one of the continental courts, who seemed to be impressed with what he heard. Next day Mr. North met a party on the public promenade, among whom was the above gentleman, to whom he was introduced, and who seemed glad to make his acquaintance. As they were saying farewell, Mr. North touched him on the shoulder, and looking into his earnest eyes said, "Wilt *thou* go with this man?" to which the ambassador promptly replied in his foreign accent, "*Most*

positeevely." He proved himself to be a true convert and disciple of Christ, and in gratitude got several of Mr. North's tracts translated into Dutch, that he might circulate them in his own country.

It was, if we mistake not, on the very same occasion, and by the same sermon, that some persons of still higher rank were deeply impressed. We are able to give this incident in Mr. North's own words, written at the time to a friend in England.

A Royal Family.

"Schwalbach, Nassau, *July 17th*, 1862.

"I have a great deal of news to tell you about what has been happening here since I came. First of all, I was greatly surprised to find Lord and Lady Kintore here, dear Christian friends of mine, and also a Mr. and Mrs. Mahoney, and Mr. Jenkinson, the Vicar of Battersea. I could not help thinking the Lord had brought us all together for some special purpose. And so I think still. It was arranged that I should give an address in Lord Kintore's rooms. It was crowded. Many were in tears, and after it was over a Prussian general and aide-de-camp to the emperor, and his sister, came to speak to me; also a Dutchman, chamberlain to the king of Holland. Finding Kintore's rooms too small, we took the large room in the hotel for the next week; this was also filled, and amongst the hearers the three Princesses of——, whose brother is next heir to the throne of——. After the service, they asked to be introduced to

me, and I had an opportunity of giving them some tracts, which they took. They afterwards sent Lord Kintore to my rooms to ask me for more tracts, as they wanted to get them translated into German, and since then they have sent to ask me to go and see them, five miles off from here, and I have been, and had a most interesting conversation with their old mother, the good Duchess. All this is remarkable, for where may not these foreigners carry the seed? They were in again at the meeting on Tuesday, and are to be, God willing, on Friday. I feel all this is of the Lord. Oh may He keep me out of myself and in Christ, and work by me and in me, that I may bring Him great glory and do great good. I do think I am better and stronger, though of course this work is hardly giving the waters a fair chance. Still it is too valuable to be missed, and I cannot but think I was brought here to do it."

The distinguished lady referred to in this letter received the gift of a Bible from Mr. North, which was constantly with her, and was under the pillow of her dying bed, from which she sent a message to Mr. North. A member of the family afterwards took an opportunity of desiring that Mr. North should have an interview with her in London.

Reference has already been made to the remarkable blessing which accompanied some of Mr. North's tracts to foreigners, and we may here quote a letter from the secretary of a tract-distributing society in Birmingham,

which mentions several individuals to whom the perusal of one of these tracts was made a means of blessing.

Such well-authenticated cases must prove a great encouragement, not only to the writers of tracts, but to those who distribute them; for these winged messengers often find entrance into homes and hearts that are closed to the preacher.

Story of a Tract.

"Ebenezer Tract Society, *2nd March*, 1868.

"My dear Sir,

"I know it will afford you pleasure when I tell you that some of the tracts you have written have been the means of doing much good amongst us. One especially God has been pleased to bless to the salvation of souls. The title of the tract is, 'Why are ye troubled?' In the first place, it was left with a poor woman who was in consumption. She had, it is thought, been looking to Christ, but had got into a very low, desponding state of mind, and this tract was the means of brightening her hopes, and enabling her to realize the value of the blessing of which I trust she was already in possession. She lent it to a neighbour, and afterwards sent it to her sister, about seventy miles away, where it was similarly useful. This sister was at the time waiting on a sick neighbour, who had lived a very careless and irreligious life, and who, when asked to think of the future, and seek pardon and salvation through Jesus Christ, exclaimed, 'Don't bother me:

I have enough to do now to bear this pain.' The Bible was read to her, but she would not listen to it. Her husband was then asked if he would read this tract which had been sent from Birmingham. 'Oh, yes,' he said, 'he would read anything that would do her good.' He then kneeled down by her bedside and read it, and when he came to one part, he said to her, 'Oh, cannot you believe that?' she said in a very abrupt manner, 'No.' He again put the same question, and received the same pettish answer; but before he got to the end of the tract she exclaimed, 'Oh, I do believe it,' and she began to cry earnestly for that mercy she had so long despised, and never ceased until she could realize a saving interest in the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The person that related this circumstance to me said, 'Oh it was such a pleasure to be with her afterwards.' I mentioned this case at one of our meetings, when one of the distributors stated that the same tract had been the means of leading two persons in her district to decide for Christ. One had joined our church, and the other the Established Church. I thought the mention of these things would encourage you in your great and good work, and hoping you may thereby be induced to write many more such tracts, and praying that God may bless our united efforts to the conversion and salvation of many precious and immortal souls,

"Believe me to remain, your humble servant,

"J. LAWRENCE."

Many of the letters which Mr. North received give curious glimpses of soul-history, and would interest even those for whom the sensational alone has charms. Here is an outline of one case.

The Backwoodsman's Conversion.

Soon after leaving school, this young man had plunged into dissipation, vice, and crime, had brought down his father's grey heirs with sorrow to the grave, and had been shipped off to the antipodes at the age of twenty-one, to get him out of the way. From the date of his landing in the colony until God's sovereign grace awoke him, fifteen years after, he never entered a place of worship, except once to attend an election meeting; he had never bent the knee in prayer since he was seventeen, except when in danger or sick from debauchery. Divine grace awoke him to concern about his soul, when living in a solitary hut shepherding, and seldom seeing any human being. He sought company, and changed his situation to get it, yet was no happier. One day when his mate had left the hut with his sheep, the thought forced itself upon him, "Now you have often promised to serve the Lord, do so now in earnest." He fell on his knees and poured out a prayer to God for forgiveness. He had no Bible, but there was in the hut a copy of Mr. North's little book, "Earnest Words," which his mate had received from a pious sister in the old country. He earnestly pored over its pages, and found peace in

believing in Jesus. His mate began to study the book, and was awakened. The little book was never out of the hands of either the one or the other; they got a New Testament, read and studied it each night together, until they parted, three months later. And a year after, and then again at a later period, he wrote to thank Mr. North as the instrument under God of his deliverance. He then said that at first mixing among a motley company of the refuse of Newgate and scions of English nobility he often hesitated about being found on his knees, but that God strengthened him and enabled him to confess his Saviour among twenty or thirty of the most profligate of men. The mate to whom he referred as being a shepherd, and whose hut he shared, was the heir of an old Scotch baronetcy. He appeared also to be brought to the Lord, but is since dead, and the baronetcy is extinct.

Opposition Overcome.

The next case belongs to a later period of Mr. North's ministry. The lady who communicates it is the wife of a member of Parliament, and was brought to the Lord through her sister, of whose conversion Mr. North had been the instrument.

"An incident in connection with a drawing-room meeting which he held in my house, was the conversion of a lady who was bitterly opposed to Mr. North and his teaching, the reason being that I, who used to enjoy with her the frivolities of life, no

longer could as a Christian do so, and the blame was laid at Mr. North's door, although he was not the means directly of my conversion. My relative would not come to the house while Mr. North was our guest. Well do I remember when addressing cards of invitation for the drawing-room meeting, I said, 'We need not ask J——, she won't come;' but my husband urged me to do so, saying, 'Ask her; if she does not come, that is her affair. You do your duty.' I did so, and prayed for her much, and she came, heard a full, free gospel, was awakened to a sense of sin and danger, and shortly after, through converse with Mr. North, who held up *Jesus*, she was enabled to believe on Him. A week later she was stricken with paralysis, but all was peace and comfort, and she gave a clear testimony of her resting in Jesus."

The cases we have here recorded are narrated not to magnify the servant, but the Master, who in His infinite wisdom devises such varied means to bring His banished back again, and who deigned to employ one who was for long a vessel of wrath, fit only for destruction, as a vessel unto honour so meet for the Master's use, alike in saving the perishing and in conveying clearer views of the grace of Christ to those who had already received it.

BROWNLOW NORTH'S ANNOTATED BIBLE.—
WINGED WORDS, OR SHORT EXTRACTS
FROM HIS MARGINAL NOTES.

"His few brief words were such as move
The human heart ; the faith-sown seeds,
Which ripen in the soil of love
To high heroic deeds." WHITTIER.

"The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the master of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd."—ECCLES. xii. 11.

XIV.

"THOU shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins." He saves from the power as well as the guilt of sin. If we are not saved from both, we are saved from neither (Matt. i. 21).

"They shall call His name Immanuel, which is, being interpreted, *God with us.*" If there was no other passage in Scripture to tell us that Jesus was God, surely this one would be sufficient (i. 23).

"When they saw the young child with Mary his mother, they fell down and worshipped *him.*" They paid no worship to Mary (ii. 11).

"But when Herod was dead." Where is Herod now? You will be dead soon (ii. 19).

"That the Scripture might be fulfilled." God tells us to believe His word: the devil tells us to believe our own hearts, but in the end the Scripture will be fulfilled (ii. 23).

"Repent ye." All men by nature pursue something that is not God. Repentance is a change of mind that turns us to God (iii. 2).

The Pharisees and Sadducees are types of the two great classes of the unconverted in all ages; the self-righteous and the unbelieving (iii. 7).

Nothing is too hard for God—not even my heart (iii. 9).

No baptism but the baptism of the Holy Ghost can avail a man, and well did John know this (iii. 11, 14).

"It becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Jesus fulfilled

all righteousness, that He might have a "gift of righteousness" to give to sinners who have none (iii. 15).

The whole question is not whether sin tempts or not, but whether it reigns or not (iv. 1.)

The devil has gained the whole world, and lost his own soul. Who would change places with him? (iv. 8.)

May what "is written" be the food of our souls, and we shall never want! (iv. 10.)

No matter what instrument is used to bring us to Jesus, no matter what the disease, if we do but go to Jesus, He will "in no wise cast out" (iv. 23).

All the graces mentioned in our Lord's beatitudes are the fruits of the Spirit (v. 1—12). What is not His work is mere counterfeit, and has no promise. *Nothing* is acceptable to God that is not the work of His Spirit. The mortification of the body is nothing unless done "through the Spirit" (see Rom. viii. 13).

Well would it be for Christians if they would examine themselves by such passages as these (v. 13, 14). Are you salt? Are you light? If not, what are you?

Salt without savour is "good for nothing." Solemn word. "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (v. 20); and yet a Pharisee could say that as touching the righteousness which is in the law he was blameless (Phil. iii. 6). Thus it is evident that no creature-righteousness can stand before God: if we are saved, it must be by being made the *righteousness of God in Christ* (2 Cor. v. 21).

One crime, that of fornication, is so great that God does not ask man to forgive it (v. 32), yet God will forgive even *that*, though the adultery be against Himself (Jer. ch. iii.).

Though it is impossible for us to attain to perfection here, yet we are to strive after it, because God tells us to

do so (v. 48). We are to strive to do whatever God commands.

It is a good sign when a man is glad that God sees him.

One of the names by which a sinner should ever remember God is, "Our Father which seeth in secret" (vi. 18).

Lord, make my eye single (vi. 22).

"Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (vi. 24). It is not said "do not," but "cannot."

"The mote and the beam" (vii. 3—5). I think that we should strive exceedingly to remember this passage, for we are very apt to forget it. I know I am.

Great faith to receive great mercies brings glory to Christ (viii. 10). Are you a great sinner believing on Jesus? Then Jesus marvels, and you glorify Him, and are saved.

Jesus is said to have "marvelled" only twice. Once at the *faith* of the centurion (viii. 10), the other time at the *unbelief* of the people of His own city (Mark vi. 6).

How different was the faith of this centurion from the faith of those who are always seeking a sign, or wanting to see or feel before they will believe!

In following Jesus we must expect tempests (viii. 23).

The command is, (and it is a very precious one,) "Trust in the Lord *at all times*," and this was "a time" even when the ship was covered with the waves (viii. 24).

Jesus knows what we say within ourselves (ix. 21).

"Thy faith" (ix. 22), faith that He was God, and could do what none but God could do.

The worse we are, the more need to cling to Jesus. Never wait till you are better. Go as you are (ix. 12).

Are we speaking for Christ as we have opportunity? If not, we are still in the possession of a dumb devil (ix. 33).

It would be exceedingly profitable when engaged in prayer to realize Jesus as putting this question to us,

"Believe ye that I am able to do what ye are asking?" If we can answer, "Yea, Lord," happy are we (ix. 28).

"The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (x. 7), close to you, but you cannot see it, because your back is to it. You must be converted, or turned round, before you can see it.

To reject the gospel message is a greater sin, and will bring on us sorer punishment, than the grossest immorality (x. 15).

To know the Father is "life eternal;" not to know Him is "everlasting destruction;" yet no man can know Him but by the teaching of Jesus Christ (xi. 27).

It is only by the Spirit of God that devils can be cast out (xii. 28). Jesus did everything by that Spirit, and nothing that is not done by or through the Spirit is acceptable.

The controversy between God and man is this, shall God be God, or self? Shall my will be done, or God's? The evidence of union with Christ is not to be sought for in feelings, but in conduct (xii. 50).

"Lest at any time they should understand *with their heart*," not with their head (xiii. 15).

It is a great thing to believe in the personal, practical agency of the devil (xiii. 19). We realise the solemn truths of Eph. vi. 12 far too little.

"Good ground" (xiii. 8). The seed is always good, the fault was in the ground.

"The thorns" (xiii. 22). Every occupation, pursuit, or company is a thorn, and to be got rid of as sinful, that chokes the word in our hearts. To be unfruitful is to be lost (John xv. 2). God never made a sinner, "an enemy hath done this" (xiii. 28).

"Then shall the righteous shine forth" (xiii. 43). Let us live for that "*then*."

Who can tell the mighty works he hinders by his unbelief,

both in his own soul, and that he might do, had he faith, for the souls of others? (xiii. 58.)

Lord, enable me to feed the multitude, and ever keep me from the neglect of private communion and prayer (xiv. 23).

Of what consequence it is to us who is the author of our religion! (xv. 13.)

When you are anxious, or wish to pray, or begin to hate sin, and long for reconciliation with God, it is a sign that it is the day of your visitation. Beware of unbelief (xvi. 3).

Human reason always tends to a wrong conclusion upon spiritual things (xvi. 7).

"Hear ye Christ," though a cloud hides Him that you cannot see Him (xvii. 5).

How many poor distressed souls keep going from minister to minister, and get no good, who, if they would go at once to Jesus, would get all their need (xvii. 16).

"It must needs be that offences come." This is all that God has been pleased to tell us about why sin is, and we must accept it like little children (xviii. 7).

There is no promise to unbelieving prayer (xxi. 22).

The only thing Jesus ever cursed on earth was a barren professor (xxi. 19).

Woe to the man who is not able to answer the question, "What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He?" (xxii. 42.)

The elect are called God's elect (Rom. viii. 33). They are also the Son of man's elect (xxiv. 31); therefore the Son of man is God.

The way the antediluvians were marrying and giving in marriage was their crowning sin. This sin is fearfully prevalent in the present day. Beware! (xxiv. 38.)

To "know God" is salvation, and so also to be "known of Him" (Gal. iv. 9). Not to know Him, and not to be known of Him, is damnation (Matt. xxv. 12; 2 Thess. i. 8).

"Lord, I knew thee, that thou art an hard man" (xxv. 24). The unprofitable servant began his sentence with "*I.*" He had formed his opinions from his own reason and judgment, consequently they were erroneous and damning.

The end of human reason is outer darkness (xxv. 30).

Those on the left hand are condemned for duties left undone and for negative religion (xxv. 45).

If we would deny ourselves as Peter denied Jesus, "I know not the man," it would be thorough self-denial (xxvi. 74).

O God, *compel* me to bear the cross if needs be for Jesus' sake (xxvii. 32).

How is it possible for any one to see the Jews as they are at this day, and doubt for one moment that Jesus Christ was the Son of God? (xxvii. 25.)

The keepers of the tomb of Jesus had but a few hours before seen the angel descend from heaven, and for fear of him they became as dead men. Yet were they able for the sake of money to tell this fearful lie (xxviii. 15). Oh the power of wickedness in the human heart! Nothing can convert a man but the Spirit of God; not even the Word of God itself, much less one rising from the dead, or any other means.

The distinguishing mark between God's people and others is that God's people prove everything by the light of God's Word (John iii. 21).

John's disciples, anxious for John's glory, said, *All men* flock to Jesus. John himself, anxious for Christ's glory, said, *No man* comes to Him (John iii. 26, 32).

A man is not saved by his works, yet his works bear witness of Him whose he is (John v. 36).

John vi. 54 is to my mind conclusive against transubstantiation. No one would dare to say that all who go to the tables where this is taught *have eternal life*, yet all who

eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ have it. The same argument applies to baptismal regeneration.

Nothing more is needed, nothing less will do, than feeding on Jesus' body and blood (vi. 53, 54).

If ever tempted to give up, remember the words of Peter, Lord, to whom shall we go? (vi. 68).

The Jews said they were sons of God (viii. 41), but they stoned Jesus for saying the same thing. It is thus evident that they understood Jesus to claim to be the Son of God in a far different sense from that in which they claimed it.

Men will believe anything rather than believe in Jesus. Jesus saw the blind man, though the blind man did not see Jesus (ix. 1).

Christ's people are taught of God to know truth from error; others are not, hence error (x. 4, 5).

"Many said, He hath a devil, and is mad" (x. 20): just what many say now of His people: but who are the maddest and most in possession of the devil, the people of this world or the people of God?

"Lazarus is dead; nevertheless let us go unto him" (xi. 14, 15). No matter, dead and stinking, Jesus can raise us up, and will, if we ask Him.

Every action of Christ's life, whether small or great, was done for the good of others.

Jesus did not say to Martha (xi. 26), Understandest thou this? but, Believest thou this? and Martha at once replied, Yea, Lord, because; though she did not understand it, she believed it, because Christ said it.

The Christian has no right to expect better treatment from the world than Christ received.

The hour had come that the Son of man should be crucified. His crucifixion was His glory. So it is ours, if we through the Spirit mortify the body (xii. 23).

"That the saying might be fulfilled which He spake, Of

them which Thou gavest me have I lost none" (xviii. 9). He only spoke it an hour or two before, but the moment He spoke it it became Scripture.

The Lord knows the street, and the very house in it, where His people dwell. Ananias was to inquire for Paul in the house of Judas, in the street called Straight (Acts ix. 11).

The Philippian jailor was an unconverted man, an anxious inquirer, a believing, baptised, rejoicing, working Christian, all in one hour (Acts xvi. 30, 33).

The visible Church at Ephesus was corrupt; so Paul departed from them, and got a room to speak in (Acts xix. 9).

Happy is the man who can say as Paul said, "I am pure from the blood of all men." Fathers, Mothers, Masters, Ministers, examine yourselves.

Some say they do not believe in sudden conversions. Instances of sudden conversion will be found in Acts ii. 41, iv. 4, v. 14, viii. 6, 39, ix. 18, 35, 42, xi. 21, xiii. 43, xiv. 1, xvi. 33, 34, xvii. 4, 12, 34, xxviii. 24.

The great sin of the unconverted man, and the one which will ultimately, if persevered in, be his eternal destruction, is this, that he makes God the father of lies, and the devil the God of truth.

A great truth is stated in the first three chapters of 1 Corinthians: viz., that man thinks God's wisdom foolishness, and that God thinks man's the same.

A man must be justified, and his title to heaven as sure as it ever can be, before he can do one work acceptable to God. Works that please God are works that spring from love, love that arises from faith in the love of God and Christ to us first.

There are two righteousnesses in which a man may stand before God at last, either in his own or in Christ's, but he cannot stand in part of one and part of the other.

To be anything out of hell is undeserved mercy.

Many when you press them to give up the world say, "What is the world? what do you call the world?" The question is directly answered in 1 John ii. 17: "The world passeth away." To follow anything, to desire anything, to obey anything, to love anything that is temporal more than God is to worship and serve the creature more than the Creator, and must be given up, or we must perish with our idol.

Who can be so safe as the man to whom God will not impute sin?

'Free from sin' by justification; 'servants to God' by sanctification. Thes etwo cannot be separated (Rom. vi. 18).

The smallest allowed sin is far more to be feared than the greatest evil that we 'would not.'

Every one who is honest with himself may know whether he minds the things of the flesh or spirit.

One of the names of Christ is "A Stumbling-stone and Rock of offence" (Rom. ix. 33).

The vessels of mercy are more to God's glory than the vessels of wrath, and we may beg Him to have mercy upon us for His glory's sake.

When once God gives a sinner to Christ or Christ to a sinner, He never changes His mind.

If you are not sure whether a thing is wrong or not, and do it, it is *wrong in you* (Rom. xiv. 14).

Spiritual understanding is God's gift, which He will give to all who ask. To be without it is inexcusable, and is in itself a proof that we are not seeking it.

The faith that does not stand by the power of God will not stand at all.

Oh that men and women would remember this, that they are at liberty to be married to whom they will, "only in the Lord"! (1 Cor. vii. 39.)

Christ not perfect without the believer, and every believer a little bit of Christ!

Would that it could be said of every minister that he used "great plainness of speech"! (2 Cor. iii. 12.)

If Paul had not had the thorn in the flesh, we should not have had the blessed text, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

We do not wait for righteousness, we have that in Christ; but we wait for the hope of righteousness, perfect sinlessness, and conformity to the image of Jesus (Gal. v. 5).

If we are not filled with the Spirit, it is our own fault: all who seek have the promise (Eph. v. 18).

God only forgives sins that are past (Rom. iii. 25), but the pope and his priests profess to forgive sins before they are committed. This is to exalt themselves above all that is called God.

The hope of the Church is the coming of the Lord Jesus (1 Cor. i. 7).

The mystery is, God in Christ: the glory of the mystery is, Christ in you (Col. i. 27, ii. 2).

Old Christians must not stand still; they must advance and get up higher, that the younger ones who are seeking to enter be not hindered.

The precise moment will come when you will have been five minutes in eternity.

Our thoughts, words, and actions are a packet of seed we are sowing every moment, and on whose fruits we shall feed throughout eternity.

Sacrifice yourself for the Lord, but do not put your trust in your sacrifice. Trust in the Lord (Ps. iv. 5).

God hateth nothing that He hath made. Yet He hateth all the wicked (Ps. v. 5). But God did not make sinners: the devil made them.

We must give up ungodly acquaintances, as well as ungodly practices, if we expect the Lord to hear us (Ps. vi. 8).

To the careless sinner God says, Fear. To the returning sinner He says, Fear not!

The devil wants man to commit no greater sin than to forget God (Ps. ix. 17).

The evidence that the Lord has lit our candle is that we let its light be seen.

Satan is an usurper, and his reign is short.

Rest your hope on the written word of God, and wait for the sensible manifestation of His favour and presence, nothing doubting.

God has not been silent; He has given us His word, He has opened His mouth and spoken, and it is by believing what He has said that we can be saved from going down into the pit.

Every Christian is a doer. The difference between him and the self-righteous is that the one is a proud doer and the other a humble doer.

David blessed the Lord "at all times" (Ps. xxxiv. 1), not only for what he liked, but for what he did not.

Don't shorten your prayers when you feel cold. Tell Jesus of it, and ask His Spirit.

Read the Bible daily, believing and doing it. Learn a verse of it every day.

Get your doctrine from the Bible. Get your example from Christ. A day will not pass after you have closed with Christ's promise, ere He will meet you with a counsel. Embrace both.

It is a most humiliating truth, that if a man denies ungodliness and worldly lusts, he forsakes all that he hath. Forsake all.

Christians doubt because they are walking dubiously.

If you believe in feeling, where are are you when the feeling is gone?

You are reconciled to God, not by feeling good, but by the death of His Son.

Think of the love of the Holy Spirit in coming into the unholy, polluted heart, and enduring the contradiction of sinners there!

I have sometimes thought that if there had been no Saviour, men would have thought more about eternity than they do.

God's people are a speaking people. It is one of their marks (see Ps. cxlv. 11, 12).

By the power of the Holy Spirit which the exalted Christ has received from the Father to give to the sons of men, many poor sinners have probably made more converts than Christ made during His life on earth.

God could do every other thing by the word of His mouth; but when He had to save sinners, He had to *come* and save them. He could not say, 'Let there be salvation,' and there was salvation.

The only plea the Psalmist ever seems to make for himself is that he is poor and needy. He never pleads his repentance, or his sorrow, or anything he has—simply, "I have nothing."

Jesus is always full of glory, and if we do not see it, it is because we are asleep.

The Scriptures are more to be depended on than the hearing of our ears or the seeing of our eyes (2 Pet. i. 19).

The man who cast out devils, and followed not with the apostles, was the first dissenter, and the whole visible church rose to forbid him! but Jesus said, Forbid him not!

Jesus was addressing the eleven best men in the world when He said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Every man can either say, If the Bible is true I am damned; or, If the Bible is true I am saved.

Trying without praying, and praying without trying, both

are a mockery. Let your motto be, Pray and try, pray and try.

If a place is lukewarm, be sure the Christians in it are lukewarm. What do you do to prevent this lukewarmness? How much do you pray? how much do you labour? Lukewarm people make lukewarm ministers.

If ever Jehovah could have sacrificed the claims of justice to the cry of mercy, it would have been in the garden of Gethsemane.

He who has felt Christ's blood on his conscience will long for Christ's sway over his heart.

We speak of killing time: we expect a resurrection, but when will there be a resurrection of dead time?

What makes you fearful? What makes you doubting? What makes you unhappy? You will say, Because I am so weak, so wicked, so helpless, so cold, so dead. But if you trusted in Christ, you would feel strong. Your real unhappiness is because you cannot find anything in yourself you dare trust to, and yet will not trust in God and His word.

The first thing is to be in earnest, the next is to convince others that you are in earnest.

Whatever God commands, He gives power to do.

Next to losing your soul, fear losing your convictions.

A Christian is not afraid of death, but of sin; an unconverted man is not afraid of sin, but of death.

Scorners neglect their Bible, so that they can't even find their places in it.

The curse of hell is being utterly forsaken of God.

Being under the curse leaves us under strong delusion to believe a lie.

Ignorance in religion won't save a man.

God never says more than He means.

There will be twenty knocks on visits of pleasure, even at a minister's door, for one of an anxious inquirer.

Begin with sin pardoned and the law kept. What a beginning!

No one can prevent your being saved but yourself. If you perish, it must be your own act and deed. If you die the second death, you must be a suicide. God will say to you in the judgment, "Thou hast destroyed thyself."

Never do anything on which you cannot ask the blessing of God.

Every man's life is a prayer.

Seek the wealthiest man in every city, and the holiest man in every city, and let their other circumstances be what they may, in every instance you will find that the holiest is the happiest.

No matter what excuse we make for it, if we are not praising God, we are disobedient to His commandment, "Praise ye the Lord."

I am very fond of the word "any wise" (Ps. xxxvii. 8), as coupled with the word "no wise" (John vi. 37). Let us not for any reason whatever do what we believe grieving to God's Spirit, and though our sins are red as scarlet, and our hearts hard as stone, Jesus will in no wise cast us out if we go to Him.

Even the tip of one's little finger is a part of the body, and if it suffer, all the members suffer with it. So, however insignificant a part of Christ's body you are, yet you are a member, and you are not made to be useless.

You are considered perfect in God's sight, for Christ's sake. Remember Jacob and Israel. There was no nation of whom such perversity and continued disobedience to God is narrated, but hear what God says of them, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel" (Num. xxiii. 21).

All your prayers have to be cleansed in the blood of

Christ before they can be presented to God: only what His Holy Spirit has inspired into them remains.

If you live till you are eighty, and are never the means of converting more than one soul, do not be discouraged. How do you know what that one may do? He may bring in hundreds, thousands, millions. Abraham had but one son, according to promise, and from him came all Israel. But if Abraham had not believed, nor thought it worth while to have that one son, where would God's chosen people have been now?

Never take your Christianity from Christians, but from Christ.

Man is born without God, and his great sin is seeking the things of God rather than God Himself.

You have got Bibles, read them. You cannot understand them unless the Holy Spirit teach you, therefore pray for the Holy Spirit.

The faith that Christ will return to the earth is the strength of His people.

Godliness with contentment is great gain, but contentment without godliness is the greatest curse.

If a man receives the Bible, he has to receive a great many things he can't understand, as well as a great many he does not like.

Paul clearly teaches the doctrines of divine election and human responsibility. I cannot reconcile them. Neither could Paul. But there they are; and the election is God's, the responsibility is ours.

I have known Christian parents who had left the world for the welfare of their own souls, so inconsistent, and so unkind to their children, as after a long interval to return to it again, to please, or to advance the temporal interests of, their families.

As long as a man lets God alone, the devil will let him alone.

It is a great error to try to conquer our corruptions before we try to conquer our unbelief. The devil says, "Conquer your sins, and faith will follow." The Scripture says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and sin shall not have dominion over you."

God has no power to save sinners but by Christ: Christ is His Power.

Love to God is not a natural emotion, far less a romantic one. The word that signifies "love" in the New Testament (ἀγάπη) is found only in Scripture, and the usual word employed by Greek Authors (ἔρως) is never used.

Let the question of eternity have a monopoly in you. It is an intensely personal question, but instead of making you selfish, it will expand your heart. He who has never felt for his own soul cannot feel for another's.

Salvation is a practical thing. God was practical: if He had not been, there would have been no salvation.

The feeling of weariness of life is not to be cherished. We should not desire it to be shortened, for we do not know how much we owe God for every day of patient continuance in well-doing, or how much each day is adding to our eternal blessedness.

BROWNLOW NORTH'S ANNOTATED BIBLE.—LONGER EXTRACTS FROM HIS INTERLEAVED BIBLE, AND FROM NOTES OF ADDRESSES.

"A writing is eternal,
For therein the dead heart liveth, the clay-cold tongue is eloquent.
As a fossil in the rock, or a coin in the mortar of a ruin,
So the symbolled thoughts tell of a departed soul."

TUPPER.

"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer" (Ps. xix. 14).

XV.

The Covenant of Grace.*

The first covenant made with Adam was broken—God was alone: man was alone: sin was between. Man was dead, for God was absent from him. Though he had desired to return, mourned for his sin, and resolved to obey Him ever after, return was impossible. There was no place of repentance under the first covenant; the law met man still, saying, Pay me that thou owest. Still the command was upon man, but there could be no second covenant made with man.

Then God made a new covenant with His own Son. His Son said, Father, they are Thine, give them to Me. Well He knew what He must give for them; well He knew His birth in Bethlehem, His baptism in Jordan, His fulfilling all righteousness, His temptation, His labours, the contradiction of sinners against Himself; well He knew that He would be betrayed, and scourged, and spit upon, and mocked, and hated. Well He knew that He must be made a curse for them, and thus become the door of return. The Spirit comes to us through the rent veil of the Redeemer's flesh, through Christ lifted up, crucified, and forsaken. The Redeemer rent for sin is the Door to the Father; the opening to God is through Him.

* The reader must bear in mind that these extracts are all published with the disadvantage of not having been prepared for the press, or revised in any way by the author.

The Curse due to Sin.

The curse of sin is to be forsaken of God, to be without God. All evil is in being without God, as every blessing is in being with Him. The curse is a present condemnation under which the soul is left to love darkness rather than light as part of the punishment of sin. Once in life, the curse is on you: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them."

Were God to say to you, I will forgive all your sins except the least sin you ever did, what would you do with that one sin? Soon the world shall have passed away; there will be but two places. Could you take that sin into heaven with you? The curse of God would be upon you; for that one sin you must depart from God. Is the curse on you, or has it been laid on Christ for you? He was made a curse in that moment when He cried, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" His soul was then made an offering for sin. He was alive to feel the curse; nothing ever wrung from Him a cry but this: He poured out His soul unto death; He was forsaken that we might be visited.

The Righteousness of Christ.

Christ has a life to give to the sinner, as well as a death. Christ was thirty-three years magnifying the law, fulfilling all righteousness, and He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Accept His blood and righteousness, and be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Strip off all the dirty rags, all your own feelings, prayers, and good deeds; come naked and foul, wash in the pool of the Saviour's blood, and then, though clean yet unprofitable, put on the robe of righteousness, be covered over with the Saviour's life, that the blessing may come on you. It is not

Jesus' blood alone, but His good works also, that are reckoned ours, as our bad works were reckoned His. He worked for His people, and His life is imputed to us, as ours was to Him.

You must have a righteousness perfect as God. Where did the thief get it? Where did Paul get it? Be covered with the thoughts, the words, the actions of Jesus, as He was covered with your thoughts and words and actions in God's sight when He was made a curse for you. The Christian is as hell-deserving the day he dies, as the day he first believes: each work is mixed with sin; were he to be judged by his last, his best work, he would be condemned. Your life is to be *hid* from God, covered by the life of Jesus, and pardoned by His blood; and hid from men. You are to be Christ's before men—all your natural disposition (the old man) hid, and only the life of Christ reproduced in your life. Every time self appears in your life you are not hid.

Accepting the Saviour.

There must be closing with Jesus as our Saviour and all, and entire consecration to Him who gave Himself for us; then the belief that we are forgiven and sons of God, and that God has accepted that consecration; it takes both these ere we are Christians. Christ gave Himself for all who give themselves to Him.

Give self past to Jesus, take Jesus past—then you can say, Jesus has got me; all my past life I gave to Him. He will say, Father, I was dead; forgive.

Give self present to Christ unreservedly, take Christ present as Saviour and Lord, as wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption to you. Then remember, I am not my own; sin is not mine; I would like, but I'll not touch it now—Christ is my Beloved.

Give self future to Christ, take Christ future as the portion of your soul. You shall see Him as He is. You shall be satisfied when you awake with His likeness. Do you love His appearing? Now we are no more slaves, but soldiers: we must pray and fight; but when He comes, the fight will be over, and we shall hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Ask yourself, Is it true that Christ offers Himself past, present, and future to me? Is it true that He is able and willing to save me in particular, that He promises to save me? Is it true that I say I won't take Him?

Savourless Salt. (Matt. v. 13.)

It is very awful when we look at the mass of professing Christians; but it is nevertheless true that the sinner who calls himself a Christian, and does not strive to season others, is not fit even to be cast back upon the dunghill from which he was originally taken. His last state is worse than the first. This is one of the few places in which God seems to speak of a *third* class in the spiritual world, always mentioned as the worst, and in God's sight the most loathsome of any. We have here the sinner still on the dunghill, the salt of the earth—the living Christian, and the salt that has no savour. So Rev. iii. 15, 16, we have "the hot," "the cold," and "the lukewarm;" with the comment by our Lord Himself, "I would thou wert cold or hot; so then because thou art *lukewarm*, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

Christ's Temptation. (Luke iv. 1—13.)

The Son of God was made the Son of man, and David's Lord became David's Son. We may be full of the Holy Ghost and led by the Spirit, and yet for a time find nothing to supply our need. In such seasons specially will we be

tempted of the devil ; but let us remember it is no sin to be tempted—the sin is to yield to the temptation. Jesus was tempted to worship the devil !

It is God's children whom the devil tempts. He can trust his own to destroy themselves. Jesus wanted bread, and His Father seemed to give Him a stone ; but God's hard things, the stones of the wilderness, are far better than the devil's bread. There are many stones in the wilderness. Jesus found it so. And the devil will tempt us to make bread of these. Beware ! the ease, the honours, the pleasures of this world are all stones, the devil's bread for which he would tempt us to fall down and worship him. If he gave us the whole world, it would be but a millstone at last about our necks to sink us into hell.

Satan continually tempts us to doubt our sonship. Have we the proof that we are the sons of God that Jesus had, namely, that we are led by the Spirit?

Jesus met Satan as a *man.* It is written, "*Man* shall not live," etc. Jesus never answered any of these temptations with words of His own. He always sought His reply in the word of God. Thus, "*It is written,* Man shall not live by bread only, but by every word of God." This is a great truth, but man cannot feed on the word of God if he does not know what is in it. When the day of trial comes, woe to those who have neglected their Bibles ! Jesus had studied the Scriptures in His days of quiet, and they stood Him in good stead in the day of temptation. Jesus would die to save sinners, but He would not sin to save them. How many worship the devil for a crumb that falls from his table ! Jesus would not do it to get the world out of his power. A momentary act of worship, a bowing of the head, and He would have saved Himself the travail of His soul, and got the world to be His own without suffering or death. But He spurned the bait.

The devil can quote and misquote Scripture if it suits him. To place ourselves in positions and circumstances of temptation is to "tempt God." Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Still "be sober, be vigilant," and take to yourselves the whole armour of God; for he will come back again. Even the Lord Jesus did all He did by the power of the Spirit; how much more should His people! How earnestly should we seek for more of the power of the Spirit of Christ!

On Prayer.

Man is a wanting animal, a needy animal. He comes into the world in want, and the first thing he does is to begin to pray. The little child, as soon as it is born, begins to cry to get its need supplied. It is a needy little thing, and it begins to pray; and so man goes on praying, praying, praying all through his life, for that which he thinks he wants. You are all praying people. Prayer is not the mere saying of words. Many people profess to pray who are the biggest impostors that ever existed, who never uttered a prayer in their lives, and yet they said prayers from the time they were little children. But prayer is conduct. The prayer of a man's heart is that which he lives to try and get. What do you live to try and get? That which you desire most, and that which you seek after habitually, from day's beginning to day's end, and from year's beginning to year's end. No sooner do men get one thing than they begin to pray for something else, and then again for something else. Can't you remember when you prayed for a little cart and horse in a toy shop? I can; and I can remember when I got it I saw a bigger cart and horse at the same toy shop. I didn't then care about the little one, but went to my mother and told her I knew of a better one, and I prayed to her for it, for she was my god,

and she granted my request. And then it went on to something else. So it was with you, and if it has never been witnessed of you in heaven, "Behold, he prayeth," (because none of these are registered as prayers in heaven,) your god is an idol, and you will live a wanting animal to the end of time, and through all eternity, even though you get, one after another, everything you set your heart upon.

In prayer, the first thing, I hold, we have to do, is to remember we are going to God. How can I go? Through Jesus Christ. What do I mean by "through Jesus Christ"? Well, my sins had made a barrier between me and God; so that I might have been as anxious as possible to go to God and pray, but I could not get there; but Jesus Christ put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and made a door, a way through the rent veil of His own flesh, by which I and you, and any poor sinner, can go to God. How did I go to my room? Through the door. How am I to come to God? Through Jesus Christ. Literally, you cannot get to God in any other way. What am I going to God for? To ask Him for things that I require. It is useless to pray for what you do not require. Multitudes go and pray for the Holy Spirit, but you know perfectly well, if there is a man or a woman who has not got the Holy Spirit witnessing with his heart at this moment that he is living for heaven more than earth, that God will give that man or woman the Holy Spirit if he will only ask, and if he really desires Him.

As sure as there is a God, prayer is the greatest weapon to prevail with God that God has put into a poor sinner's hand. I do not believe there is a saint on earth who has any conception of what God has given to man when He gave him prayer. Either there is no God at all, or prayer is a real transaction, a real speaking to a real person, who can do not only what we ask, but exceeding abundantly

above all that we ask or think. Ask, then, through Jesus Christ; and before you put up your petition, ask yourself, "Do I wish it?"

Spiritual Food.

When Jesus had raised the daughter of Jairus, He commanded that something should be given her to eat. Not only must we be made alive, but kept alive. It is impossible for spiritual life to exist without spiritual food; and if you will show me a man who is living in the neglect of habitual and prayerful study of God's Word, I will show you a man who has no right to call himself a Christian. You remember to get your breakfast and dinner; you never forget that. Oh, what about eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of man? What sweet things proceed out of the mouth of God! The anxious soul reads, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." How much sin is left, if the blood of Jesus cleanses from it all? Feed, troubled soul, feed, feed on that word of God! "Owe no man anything but love." Do you owe God anything? Take Him a dead Jesus. How much do you owe God after taking Him a dead Jesus? Nothing but to love Him. Feed, feed on that word out of the mouth of God. Take Jesus to God; look at His hands and feet, and say, "Not because I feel, but because it is written in the fifty-third of Isaiah, I believe that God hath laid on Him the iniquities of us all."

Blessedness of Seeking Christ.

I have had many anxious souls come to see me, and I have seen them get peace immediately by believing God. "Has God forgiven you?" I say; and the troubled one replies, "I dare not say He has." "Have you asked Him?" "Yes." "Do you wish to be God's child, and to

give up sin?" "Oh, yes, sir; God knows I do wish to be Christ's only." "And you are not?" "No, sir." "Well, but you are blessed." "Oh, no, sir." "Then the Bible is not true." "Oh, yes, it is." "But what does the Bible say of the state of those who hunger and thirst after righteousness?" "Please, sir, it says they are blessed." "Then are not you blessed?" "Oh, sir, I'm afraid to say I am." "But if God says you are, who is it says you are not? is it not the devil?" "Oh, yes, sir." "And is he not a liar from the beginning?" "Oh, yes, sir; he must be the liar. I do hunger and thirst after righteousness." "Then thou art blessed, for God has promised that thou shalt be filled." And I have seen anxious souls feed on that text and get great peace—the peace of God; for "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

The Thirteenth Psalm.

"How long wilt Thou forget me, O Lord?"—Spiritual Darkness.

There are few Christians who escape seasons of cloudiness and darkness. There are few who are not at times constrained, through the corruptions of their hearts and the suggestions and temptations of Satan, to cry out as Paul did, 'Oh wretched man that I am!' but this should only drive us closer to Christ. The worse we feel ourselves to be, the greater our need to go to the Physician. This is what David did, and he was soon enabled to sing unto the Lord.

David was in trouble, his enemy seemed to be exalted over him, but he did not despair. He began to pray, to put God in mind, and he was soon enabled to praise. The Holy Ghost teaches us that Christians in temptation may

put God in mind that it is for His own glory that He should deliver them, lest the enemy should say, 'See, there is a sinner that went to Christ, and I have prevailed against him.' We should remember this, and use it. David says, I have trusted in Thy mercy; therefore, bad as things may look, my heart shall rejoice in Thy salvation. I have no perceptible sense of it just now, but for all that it will come, and having trusted in Thee I shall yet rejoice.

The Fifteenth Psalm.*

"Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle?"—Justification and Sanctification.

Christ is God's tabernacle. In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (Colos. ii. 9). Now who shall abide in Christ? He that is sanctified. Who is sanctified? He that abideth in Christ. Thus in John xv. 4: "Abide in me, and I in you." The sinner in Christ is his justification; Christ in the sinner is his sanctification. The two invariably go together. Where there is no Christ, there is no true sanctification; where there is no sanctification, there is no Christ. "He that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1 John iii. 24).

The Sixteenth Psalm.

"Preserve me, O God."—God the Portion of His people.

We know from Peter (Acts ii. 25), that David in this Psalm at least speaks in the person of Christ. This makes the second verse very interesting, as showing unto whom His goodness does extend; see Rom. iii. 22. "Thou hast

* We omit Mr. North's notes on Psalm xiv., on the sin of atheism, as they have been already given in substance in the section on the existence of God (pp. 223, 228, 231).

said unto Jehovah, Thou art my Lord" (v. 2): this statement of David's is very valuable, and plainly tells us who the person was he called his Lord, namely, The LORD JEHOVAH. Woe unto the person that makes a lord of any other thing or person! 'their sorrows shall be multiplied' (v. 4); and let us remember that that is our lord that rules and governs us (Rom. vi. 16). Compare this passage with the first words of Ps. cx. and Luke xx. 41—44.

Well might David say he had a goodly heritage (v. 6), for he had just told us that the Lord was the portion of his inheritance: every Christian may say the same; and also that the Lord's portion is His people (Deut. xxxii. 9).

It is the destruction of the wicked that they will not follow God's counsel (v. 7; see Prov. i. 24—31). There are but two counsellors, the heart and the Word of God, and we are all following one or other. No man can follow both.

The great secret of all spiritual strength is to set the Lord always before us (v. 8), to see Him who is invisible continually present. Seeing Him close to us, we will not fear the might of any adversary; our hearts will be glad, our tongues will show forth God's praise, and living or dying we shall have a sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection. (See Acts ii. 25—30.)

Christ is the Path or Way of Life (v. 11), and God the Spirit will reveal Christ to all who ask Him. The rest of the verse is simple truth, yet truth that the natural man cannot receive. We may test our religion by this verse, "In Thy presence is fulness of joy."

THE SEVENTEENTH PSALM.

"Hear the right, O Lord, attend unto my prayer."—The Portion of the Worldly.

It is a great thing when we can honestly say to Him who searcheth the heart, that our prayer goeth not out of feigned

lips, that the words of our mouth are the real desires of our hearts (v. 1).

As for me, it is a light thing for me to be judged of you or of man's judgment; "Let my sentence come forth from *Thy* presence" (v. 2). There is no other way either of getting or keeping life, but by receiving, and believing, and acting upon the words of God's lips (v. 4); and it is He only who can hold us up. Concerning the ways and habits and pursuits of the world, which are the paths of the destroyer, it is by attending to Thy word that I have kept myself from these.

But David requires God's Spirit as well as God's Word, and therefore he prays, "Hold Thou me up" (v. 5). The name of God given in v. 7 is one of God's most precious names, viz., "Thou that savest them which put their trust in Thee." Wicked men, while they are following their own desires, and have not God in all their thoughts, are yet fulfilling God's purposes, and are here called God's sword (v. 13). Had there been no Herod, no Judas, no Caiaphas, no Pontius Pilate, there never would have been a "Christ crucified," and poor sinners would have had no Saviour. Yet the wicked are not hereby justified. They are fulfilling the desires of their own hearts. Christians often suffer much persecution from the wicked; let us remember that they could have no power at all against us unless it were given them from above, and that God will surely overrule it for our good. They get their portion here, but is it not far better to pray as David did, and suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season?

In all David's affliction this was his rejoicing, that he had been made the righteousness of God in Christ (v. 15); that whatever temporal sufferings he might endure, every day brought him nearer to the day when he would behold God's face; and that when He did behold His face, it would be to

be made completely like Him, and to be with Him for ever (1 John iii. 2). It is this hope that cheers and animates the Christian now. The things of this world are passing shadows, but the riches of Christ's people abide for ever. There is no hope for the man who seeks satisfaction or is satisfied with anything short of being conformed to the image of Christ, so long as he remains in such a state.

The Twenty-fourth Psalm.

"The earth is the Lord's."—A Psalm of the Ascension.

This Psalm seems to me a song for the heavenly hosts at the ascension of our Lord. They burst forth in triumph, "The earth is the Lord's," etc. It was His by creation; it had been in the power of an usurper; it was redeemed out of his hand, and was again His. The Holy One and the Just was on the point of ascending up on high to present His finished work to His Father and His God, and to receive from God blessing and righteousness for His people. The Person spoken of is He of whom alone it ever could be said that He had clean hands and a pure heart, and who of right, and in His own righteousness, could ascend into the hill of the Lord (v. 3—5). When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and received gifts for men. Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first? He that descended is the same also that ascended (Eph. iv. 8, 9). It is evident that Jehovah of hosts must have left that place to which the everlasting gates are an entrance, or they would not have needed to have been lifted up for His re-admission. He shall receive from the Father, on account of what He has done, the gift of all those that seek Him: see John vi. 37, and x. 28, 29, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me. My Father which gave them Me is greater than all." I take the sixth verse

to be an interpretation of the fifth, telling us what it really was that Christ received, viz., "the generation of them that seek Him." Seek whom? Thy face, O Jacob, O seed of Abraham, O Christ! Then follows a full chorus of welcome to the Conqueror, who is Jehovah of hosts: "As for our Redeemer, the Lord of hosts is His name."

The Forty-seventh Psalm.

"O clap your hands, all ye people."—On the Kingship of Christ.

This Psalm, like the twenty-fourth, seems to me a song of victory and triumph celebrating the ascension of the Lord Jesus: the former perhaps for the hosts in heaven to sing, and this for the believer on earth. Satan was the prince of this world, but the Lord has conquered him, and He is now really the King of the whole earth, ordering all things according to the good pleasure of His will. He now is able to subdue all our enemies for us; for He has already triumphed over them in His cross, and we need no longer fear that we shall get that eternal portion which our sins deserved, and into which Satan would plunge us if he could; for it is no longer he, but the Lord, who shall choose our inheritance for us, and He is gone up with a shout, and with the sound of a trumpet, to His Father's house of many mansions, to prepare a place for us. Contemplating these truths, the heart becomes full of love and gratitude, and bursts out into praise, and this it is that is the great rejoicing; and the believer should remember and repeat again and again, that the earth has been reconquered, that Satan is no longer king, but that God is the King of the whole earth. Never forget that "the Lord reigneth." He is greatly exalted. Let us ever remember that all Christ's victories and highest exaltations were dependent on His bearing His cross; and

that the disciple is not above his Lord. He that does not praise God has no understanding (v. 7); in Jer. iv. 22, v. 21, he is called a fool, and those without understanding are said in Rom. i. 31, to be worthy of death.

The Fifty-first Psalm.

"Have mercy upon me, O God."—The Penitent's Prayer.

David had sinned terribly against light and knowledge; but to remain away from God could only increase his guilt; so he goes to God just as he is, confesses his sin, and throwing himself on His mercy, beseeches God to blot it out, to wash him, and to cleanse him from it. Nothing can more truly destroy us than to keep away from God because we have sinned against Him. How plainly does the language of the fifth verse tell us what the Holy Ghost had taught David about the doctrine of original sin. Great as was his guilt, David knew that there was a Fountain open for sin and uncleanness, in which God could wash even his sin away (v. 7), and so purge him that he should be whiter than snow in God's sight (1 John i. 7), and he not only prayed that he might be made thus clean, but that God would also cause him to rejoice in the knowledge that his sins were forgiven. When David was sorry for his sin, he knew that it was God's doing; for he says, "The bones which *Thou* hast broken shall rejoice." The devil never makes people uneasy about their sins. A clean heart is the creation of God.

It is a very good sign of a man when he is really anxious for God's presence (v. 11). The natural man dreads God's presence, and is miserable when he remembers that God's eye is upon him, yet there is no greater curse than to be "without God." He prays, Restore unto me not only Thy salvation, but the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me by

Thy grace and Thy Holy Spirit; for unless Thou uphold me, as well as restore me, I shall soon fall into sin again.

David was not a priest or minister, yet he uses it as an argument with God that if He forgave him he would go and teach other sinners, and that other sinners would be converted through his instrumentality. It is quite evident that all who are themselves in Christ are bound as they have opportunity to try to bring others to Him. In v. 14, 15, David promises that if God would forgive him, his tongue should sing aloud of His righteousness, and then adds, as if remembering how utterly unable he was of himself to keep such a promise, "O Lord, open *Thou* my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise."

Well did David understand that no outward observances could really be acceptable to God without the inward work of the Holy Spirit on the heart; but when they spring from faith and love and a spirit of filial obedience, God is well pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness.

The Fifty-sixth Psalm.

"Be merciful unto me, O God; for man would swallow me up."—The Believer's Conflict.

It is a great thing to know that there is no moment in which our enemies are not fighting against us. Whether in prosperity or adversity, those against whom we have to contend are daily watching to swallow us up, and as David says, 'they be many.' See Eph. vi. 12, for a test of some of them. ("We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers," etc.) It is on account of these ever-watchful enemies that Jesus says unto us all, "Watch." Yet while we watch and pray we should ever remember that Christ has overcome all these enemies for us, and when doubts and fears come upon us we should

trust in God and His Word. St. Paul tells us in Heb. xiii. 6, that all those who have put their trust in the Lord may boldly say what David says here, "I will not fear what flesh can do unto me" (ver. 4).

What a valuable thing must man's soul be, when so many are contending for it! See Ps. lv. 18: "there were many with me," and here, "there be many that fight against me." We should lay up these sayings in our hearts. Our enemies try all sorts of ways to hurt and destroy us, and one of the most common is "hiding themselves" (ver. 6). Oh how many a sin is there lurking in the recesses of my heart, of which I have no idea, that only wants a fitting opportunity to discover itself! Lord, drag them out as shall be good for me, and destroy them, till there is not one of them left! Regarding the enemies spoken of in the Psalms in this light makes all those passages clear where David prays God to show them no mercy.

The faith of David was the gift of the Holy Ghost, and should be our faith. The command is, "Pray and believe." Though the blessing may tarry, it is sure, *for it is promised;* only cry on. It was God's word that David hoped on and looked at, not his own frames and feelings, or even those enemies that oppressed him, and would swallow him up (ver. 11). He would cry unto the Lord, and then he knew that his enemies would be turned back. He trusted that God had done the greater thing for him, and surely he might trust Him to do the less.

"The light of the living" (v. 13) is the gospel of Jesus Christ. All other guides have no light in them, and those who are led by them will surely fall into the ditch. Our Lord warns us, "Take heed that the light that is in thee be not darkness," and we must try it diligently by the Word of God, with earnest prayer for the teaching of the Holy Spirit, asking all in the name of Jesus, and for the sake of what He has done.

The Eighty-sixth Psalm. *

"Bow down Thine ear, O Lord."—The Prayer of the Poor and Needy Soul.

"Be merciful unto me," by not only forgiving my sins, but by preserving me sinless in Thy sight, by keeping me in Christ. I have daily need, so I daily cry. The true character of the Christian is that he is both poor, and needy, and holy. Poor and needy as having neither holiness nor any other good thing of his own, and yet holy as trusting or believing in God's salvation in Christ, and so made "the righteousness of God" (see 2 Cor. v. 21). God cannot look at us unless we are holy in His sight, for He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity (Hab. i. 13), and He therefore makes His people a gift of righteousness (Rom. v. 17), which they are desired to put on, as was the prodigal the best robe, and in *this righteousness* God sees them holy as He is holy. Trusting to this imputed righteousness, they may say, "I am holy," for it means no more than that Jesus Christ is made unto me righteousness (1 Cor. i. 30), and for His sake 'bow down Thine ear,' and 'preserve my soul.' I am in Christ: keep me in Christ. David not only cried, "Save my soul," but, "Rejoice my soul." We see here how a soul that feels itself poor and needy, and needing mercy, may yet be a rejoicing soul. There are two parts in prayer, praying and trying; David *prayed* to rejoice, (ver. 4), and now *tries* to rejoice by contemplating God (ver. 5). Poor and needy as he was, he endeavoured to get rejoicing into his soul by looking away from his own need, and by remembering what God was—good, ready to forgive, plenteous in mercy, and that not to some only, but to all

* The last discourse which Mr. North preached (at Alexandria, Dumbartonshire), was an exposition of this Psalm, of which the above notes, taken from his interleaved Psalter, doubtless present the substance.

without exception that call upon Him; and the *only* reason David has for boldly saying, "Thou wilt answer me," is, that he calls. "I will call—Thou wilt answer;" the one follows the other of necessity; only *believe.* David seems to have been full of peace when he wrote this Psalm, but he did not forget that trouble would likely come, and therefore habituates himself *now* to meditate upon Him whom alone he can call upon to any purpose *then.* The gods that men worship do what they can for them, but what god can do as our God in sickness, death, and judgment?

To praise God with all our heart (and God will accept nothing less), we must praise Him with our lives as well as with our lips. What right had David to say, "Thou *hast* delivered my soul from hell"? (ver. 13.) The very greatest, even the authority of God's word. It was not his own heart that taught him that God heard his prayers, but God's word, and he believed *that,* and said, "Thou hast delivered," etc. Observe, David confesses that he was worthy of hell, but God's mercy had been so great that He delivered his soul from what he justly deserved. One invariable mark of a true Christian is that he feels it is of God's mercy that he is not in hell. Enemies will for ever be rising up against the Christian, both in his own heart and in the world, but in his resistance to these let him remember what God is. Let us ever remember that "our soul" is the one object our enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil, are seeking after, and that when we are in conflict, it is our soul we are fighting for. If these prevail, we lose our soul. No sooner is a man delivered than the enemies of his soul "rise against him." They were there before, but they did not rise, for they had no opposition. We should count all those our enemies in the world who do not set God before them, still loving them and trying to do them good.

Observe, David not only calls to mind God's compassion

and graciousness, longsuffering and mercy, as being reasons why he might expect help from God, but he remembers also that God's truth is on his side, (ver. 15), in that He had promised to save all that put their trust in Him. Unless God's truth is on our side, we must perish, for His truth is pledged for our destruction: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." So that if we are saved we must be without sin in God's sight, which we can only be by the righteousness of Christ imputed to us. (See Rom. iii. 21—24.)

David both fought and prayed against his spiritual enemies. It is the great and abiding comfort of the poor and needy Christian in the midst of his enemies, that the Lord has promised not only righteousness, but strength (ver. 16), "As thy days, so shall thy strength be;" and while we should never forget Eph. vi. 12, "We wrestle against principalities," we should ever remember Phil. iv. 13, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." The one will keep us watching, the other hoping, and believing, and trying.

The greatest token for good (ver. 17), which the Lord can show us, and the one which most greatly confounds and silences our enemies, is the power to prevent their getting dominion over us. It was by this token that David knew that God was with him (see Ps. xli. 11), and it is by this token that we are to know whether or not we are in Christ; for the great object of our enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil, is to get us to break wilfully God's commands; and if they cannot succeed, we may know that God is in us: (1 John ii. 3, 4, 5,) "Hereby do we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments," etc. For this "token" we should pray and fight, and when we get the slightest victory, give God all the glory, saying, "For *Thou*, Lord, hast holpen me."

LATER EVANGELISTIC WORK IN LARGE TOWNS OF ENGLAND.

"The prayer thy lip hath prompted once, the tear thy care hath dried,
The sin-stained soul thy comfort cheered when earth all hope denied,
Shall rise on high on seraph wings to God's all-listening ear,
And through eternity resound in echoes sweet and clear."

ANNA SHIPTON.

"As much as in me is I am ready to preach the gospel. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth."—ROMANS i. 15, 16.

XVI.

AFTER having devoted the first ten years of his evangelistic labours chiefly to Scotland, which had become to him a second home, doors of usefulness were opened to Brownlow North in many of the cities and large towns of England, and he felt himself providentially led to preach the gospel of the kingdom widely there. He returned to Scotland chiefly to rest and recruit his exhausted energies, or to fulfil special engagements, such as being present at the Annual Religious Conference in Perth in the month of September of each year.

A considerable portion also of his autumn months of repose he devoted to writing and carrying through the press his various publications, which, though far from being pretentious in their aim, were the result of much prayerful study of the Divine Word, exhibit a thorough mastery in handling his subject, and as the reader may perceive from the evidences adduced in this volume, have been not only widely circulated, but widely blessed. In addressing the public through the press, as well as from the pulpit or platform, Mr. North was following in the steps of more than one of his ancestors, who had published

works and treatises of some worth in their day. The third Lord North, who was the discoverer of the medicinal virtues of Tunbridge Wells, published in 1659 "The Forest promiscuous of several Seasons' Productions." The first Baron Guilford, who was made Solicitor-General in 1671, and was Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, wrote several legal treatises; while the fourth Lord North in 1682 published a volume of "Essays on Light on the way to Paradise," comprising such topics as Goodness, Eternity, and Original Sin.

In the early part of 1871, Mr. North changed his residence from Elgin to London, where he purchased a house to be his home in place of the beautiful residence of The Knoll, of which indeed he appeared to feel he was in danger of making an idol.

The earlier years of this decade were largely devoted to England, and were far from fruitless, although from the wider extent of the field, and its distance from the scene of his former labours, it was only the most intimate among his Scotch friends who knew how the Master was owning His servant's unwearied efforts to gather in souls. We shall give the results of these labours to a large extent in his own words, written at the time to some of his constant correspondents.

In March, 1868, he paid a visit to Birmingham, of which he writes: "I had a most precious meeting last night, enough to break the hardest heart, one would think. At the end God's holiest and best

clustered round me with tears, blessing me and wishing me God speed. May their prayers be heard for me, and may God bless me!"

From Birmingham he went to Cardiff and Swansea in Wales, where his visit and powerful pleading with souls caused a very general and deep impression.

Of this visit to Swansea Mr. North thus records his own impression :—

"I am sure you will rejoice with me, dear ——, when you hear that last night I had a meeting which to my own feelings was the most encouraging one I have had for years. It was in the Music Hall, an enormous place with double galleries, holding thousands. I went under the idea that there would not be a hundred people there, but it was crammed, hundreds standing on the floor of the lower hall. Many of the upper classes were there, and a more solemnised congregation I have seldom seen. Indeed, I hope Swansea is at least *moved.* I am very sanguine that much real good will be done. The people seemed taken aback as if it was all new to them. I believe I spoke with power. I came home softened, and cried like a child. To-day the impression remains on me, and I feel at peace with God. Oh, may the peace never be again broken. May He lead, and I follow!

"Your always affectionate,
"Brownlow North."

A week later he again wrote :—

"I have to tell of such a meeting! The last day has been the great day of the Feast. Yesterday it was blowing a gale of wind and raining hard at the time of the meeting, and I did not think it possible I could have any people to

speak to. Yet, though the storm continued, I found the place crammed, and it is an enormous place. It being the last night, I had determined to have a second address for inquirers. I began, and so far as sympathy goes, I felt that as I warmed the people warmed, and I spoke to an audience that was almost breathless through interest the whole time, for two hours and ten minutes. So far as I can judge I have not spoken so for years, but the issue is with the Lord."

In the spring of the following year he paid a visit to Sunderland, and of the work there he writes :—

"SUNDERLAND, *March 11th*, 1869.

"I am so very sorry to hear you are ill, my very dear child. May God be pleased soon to restore you ! I had a most precious night last night (on the cxlv. Psalm), the congregation quite carried with me. Many ministers there. After speaking for more than an hour, I said something about time failing, when two or three voices cried out, 'Go on, go on,' and I went on for half an hour more. There was evident impression, and the ministers, were delighted. To God be all the glory ! Last night a young man came in distress. Mr. R., one of the ministers, knew him, and said it was morbidness, that he had been so for a year. I told him to come and see me to-day, and he has left me rejoicing. Indeed, there is nothing like working for God. He *is* so good, and His property is always to have mercy and forgive."

In the spring of 1870, he again visited Birmingham, and held services there. He writes on the 3rd March :—

"Last night was wonderful. Loads of young men were

unable to get in, and they were just the kind I wanted. Hundreds of them were, I should say, thoroughly 'fast' young men: but they behaved very well; first quiet, then attentive, then solemnized. The only disturbance was from one or two fainting from the heat. I preached in my fur coat! At the end a paper was handed up to me, begging for another address, which I announced for Friday, the 25th, amidst loud cheers, which I stopped. I don't, however, expect to get such another meeting. We shall see. I am rather headachy, as you may imagine after last night. I forgot to say I preached for an hour and a half fully. Too long for speaker or hearers.

"Yours affectionately,

"BROWNLOW NORTH."

Of the closing meeting he was able to write:—

"I must send you a line on my last day in Birmingham, my visit to which I cannot but think has been of much moment to many. Two men have just left me who found me out in consequence of last night's meeting. It was a very remarkable one. The enormous place was full; mostly men—many of quite the rougher sort, who all sat, about 3,000 of them, deeply attentive for over an hour's sermon. I do think good has been done here.

A man from North Wales wants to translate 'The Rich Man and Lazarus' into Welsh."

A few days later he was in the midst of equally exciting and engrossing work in London, of which he writes to the Earl of Kintore,—

"LONDON, *March 9th*, 1870.

"MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,—I know that you will be very glad to hear that I had a most encouraging meeting last night, in St. James's Hall. After the service, Sir Thomas

Beauchamp got General Russell to introduce him, and told me that Mr. ——, an old shooting friend of mine, and a large proprietor in N——shire, had been impressed by one of my books, and would like to see me, so I agreed to go and dine with him some day to meet him: then came a young man into the waiting-room, a clerk in H. and I.'s, to say I had been the means of saving his soul when last in London. 'Yes,' said Fishbourne, as the man left the room, 'and *he* has been the means of saving hundreds of others since.' All this is very pleasing."

According to arrangement, he met his old sporting friend at dinner; and after the ladies left for the drawing-room, Mr. North began a very personal conversation about spiritual and eternal things, and got the whole of the gentlemen to bow their knees together in prayer. His friend was just starting for a long cruise in his yacht, but came to hear him preach before he sailed, and seemed much interested in the sermon. Thus it was that he continued steadily to sow beside all waters, not observing the wind, lest he should stay his hand from sowing the precious seed, nor considering the clouds, lest he should withhold his hand from reaping the precious sheaves; but heedless of all difficulties, he sowed the seed of life in the morning, and withheld not his hand in the evening; for he knew not which should prosper, either this or that, or whether they both should be alike good. This is the true calling and work of each of the Lord's labourers. There are many who are ready to work in a time of revival, who stand all the day, and day after day, idle

in a year of drought. These are little-faiths and little-hopes; but men and women who are strong in faith and hope will look more to God's promises than to human probabilities, and like him whose work we are recording, their gleanings in the years of drought will outweigh and outvalue the whole vintage of others in their years of plenty. These are the true and trusty servants who are found waiting upon their Master, watching for souls, and working equally diligently at all times, and they shall in no wise lose their reward.

From London he went to Ipswich, in April, from whence he wrote, "I have just had visitors,—a mother anxious for her son, and bringing him for me to talk to. May God bless what I said, for His truth's sake! I had an enormous meeting last night, perhaps more squeezed in than any night yet; and the people wondrously attentive. Beyond this I know nothing. I took a new text (John xi. 25—27), 'I am the Resurrection and the Life,' etc. Martha not understanding, yet believing our Lord,—taking the Bible as we find it. Poor dear Sir James, may the Lord spare him!"

Soon after he heard of the death of Sir James Simpson, who had proved a very true and serviceable friend to him, and wrote expressing his sorrow in characteristic fashion: "I am sorry for you, sorry for your mother, sorry for his family, sorry for myself, sorry for Edinburgh, sorry for the country, but not sorry for him."

A month later he was labouring in Plymouth, which

he then visited for the first time. Of his work here he thus writes :—

"I do hope a wide-spread impression has been made. The church, the largest here, was crammed to suffocation ; but for all that the minister, a good man, came up to the pulpit after the prayer, and told me there was a large crowd outside, and the doors were locked ; so I got up, and asked the congregation to squeeze as close as possible, had them opened, and got in another hundred. A Church dignitary was preaching within a hundred yards or so of me, and many of those who were hearing him in the morning were hearing me in the evening. I trust the chapter and verse I was able to show them for what I told them may have dissipated his false teaching. He preaches the wisdom of man."

On leaving he received a long and warm letter of earnest thanks from a young woman for the spiritual blessing he had been the means of conveying to her. The letter is anonymous, but it shows us how the heavenly plant of grace will grow under the most adverse conditions. She writes :—

"My parents are ungodly, living utterly careless of their souls ; they do not even pray to God, or say prayers at any time. I never heard them utter a word of prayer in my life. I don't think they ever think of their souls. I have tried to get them to come and hear you, but have not succeeded. Oh, pray for them. I have *not one* Christian relative. I have one or two Christian friends, but I have never been able to have Christian intercourse with them. I have often tried, but of no avail, and I never felt that I could pour out my heart to an earthly friend before I heard you. Then I thought I could tell you everything. God

grant that I may (as you are leaving) have some one whom I can have Christian intercourse with! . . . I do not know how to express myself. My soul is overwhelmed with love to Christ. I never felt nor thought in my whole life as I do now, and have ever since I heard you preach of Christ. Yes, I know God our heavenly Father did specially send you to me. You have, by your preaching, thrown fresh life across my mind, you have caused my eyes to open, and my ears to hear, and my heart to understand the boundless love of God towards us, His tenderness and compassion. You have, by the Spirit of the Lord, caused me to understand more of the love of Christ Jesus our Lord; you have caused me to put my whole trust in Jesus, and to cast myself utterly and completely on Him. I shall never, never forget you."

Many persons complained of the hardness and even severity of Brownlow North's preaching, and those who only heard him in public addressing sinners, and warning them to flee from the wrath to come, may not unnaturally have supposed that he looked solely at the terrors of the law, and did not himself fully realize or communicate to others the sweetness and infinite fulness of Divine love. Yet those who read the above letter, and several others in this volume, will find that he was likewise largely used by the Divine Spirit in conveying a sweet, assuring, and overpowering sense of Christ's love to broken and contrite hearts. This was especially the case in regard to those with whom he had opportunity of conversing in private; and although, perhaps, it was a more predominant feature of the later years of his ministry, it was not by any means confined to these.

It was early in his career that he happened one day to be alone for a few minutes with a young lady, who afterwards became the wife and active helpmate of a devoted minister of Christ in Edinburgh. In early life she had felt her need of a Saviour, and tried to become a Christian, but failed in finding the sinner's Saviour. She looked too much into her own heart, and sought there, and sought in vain, for that kind and degree of conviction of sin which she thought to be necessary to fit her for coming to Jesus. As a natural result, she was almost reduced to despair. Mr. North, guided by the Spirit, on whose direction he constantly relied, and with that aptitude to understand the exact position of an anxious soul with which he was gifted, asked her if she was saved, and on her replying that she was not, he asked her, Why? and she answered, "Because I do not feel that I love Jesus." He then said simply, "That does not matter, *He loves you.*" No other word was spoken, but this was enough, and was the means of leading her to trust in the Saviour's dying love to sinners. She was enabled henceforth to rest in that love, and to follow Christ, and after a useful and happy life, closed it, in the beginning of 1877, by a very triumphant death.

We are inclined to think, however, that Mr. North did not do himself quite justice, or perhaps the children of God either, by confining himself so much as he did to the discourses and the subjects with which he had begun his ministry. In new towns

and districts these continued to the end to be largely blessed, and probably this made him averse to deliver many new discourses. It was certainly no indolence that led him to pursue this course, and no inability to work out fresh addresses; for the three hours of prayer and hard study of the Word of God by which he began each day are as much time and toil as most ministers devote to the preparation of two wholly new sermons each week, and the richness and variety of his original annotations in his Bible, on almost all the books of Scripture, attest the freshness of his mental powers, and the successful results of his constant study. But those who merely heard his evangelistic addresses, or even perused his published works, could form but a very imperfect idea of the fulness, the richness, the variety, the tenderness of his meditations on the Word of God which he gave out in family worship, and which he committed in a succinct and often epigrammatic form to writing on the interleaved pages and margins of his Bibles, some of which will be found in this volume in the two chapters devoted to these extracts. We have been told that his addresses on the forenoons of week-days in the last few years of his life often partook more of this character, were addressed chiefly to believers, and were much relished and prized by many who would not have found so much that was helpful, or perhaps congenial to their state of mind and feeling, in his rousing appeals to the careless and the self-righteous.

On closing his series of services in Plymouth he passed through London, and there addressed the Royal Hospital for Incurables, which he also presented with a gift of books. The manager, in thanking him for his address and kind present, was able to report that his words had made a great impression on these poor sufferers, who had expressed their deep gratitude for his visit.

It was an interesting trait in Mr. North's Christian character, that while as a natural orator he had a passion, and almost a weakness, for addressing very large audiences, whom he could keep spell-bound, hanging upon his lips, he never refused to go to address a small gathering when he felt that this was a leading of providence and a call from his Master; and in speaking in the Lord's name to such an assembly as a hospital for the incurable, or a ship's crew, or a police force, he from time to time received not a few precious souls for his reward. To one who once remarked to him, "You must feel it a great responsibility to address so many thousands," he replied, "I feel it a great responsibility to address half a dozen people."

In returning homewards he preached in Edinburgh, and when there received the following touching letter:—

"*Sunday Evening.*

"DEAR SIR,—Will you pardon the liberty a stranger takes in writing to you? I do humbly and earnestly ask an interest in your prayers. Will you pray to God that He may convert

me to Himself? I have several times had the privilege of hearing you preach in Edinburgh. The first time was a few years ago: then I was happy with my beloved mother and my brothers and sisters. Now my mother and all my sisters lie in the silent tomb beside my father. My brothers are all scattered, and I am left alone, almost without a friend in the world. After our home was broken up, I went out as governess, but at present I am again in search of a situation. Oh, dear Mr. North, will you pray for me, that though I am deprived of nearly all my earthly family, I may belong to the family of God, and not myself only, but also my three dear brothers? Do pray for us. Again I ask your forgiveness for addressing you: and that every blessing both temporal and spiritual may be vouchsafed to you and yours is the earnest desire of a young woman who loves and respects you."

We insert this letter not only to show to what desolate and sorrowing hearts he was made the means of conveying the truest consolation, but that we may have the opportunity of stating that amid all the multitudinous correspondence addressed to him during twenty years, so far as perused by us, this is the solitary instance in which any reference is made to temporal difficulties or want of means. Yet so thoroughly was this letter prompted by a desire for spiritual and not temporal benefit, as not to be signed either with name or initials, or to bear any address by which the writer could possibly be identified. This fact proves that, whether all the instances of spiritual impression were permanent or not, the profession was at least not made from hypocritical motives. It

affords an ample refutation of that somewhat numerous class who sneer at the anxiety, and cast suspicion upon the sincerity of those who profess to be spiritually concerned, simply because "What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" are the most absorbing questions with themselves; because they have never been led to cry "What must I do to be saved?" as a question that casts all others, even the most urgent, into the shade; and because in a world of guile a few hypocrites will turn up, who will trade even upon a profession of religious conviction, and seek to impose upon the too often unsuspecting simplicity of the children of light, whom their great Master has bidden unite the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove.

Mr. North now returned to his home in Elgin, and on Tuesday, the 9th of August, a public meeting of the inhabitants of Bishopmill (the suburb of Elgin, where his residence was situated) was convened, to receive from him the gift of a Mission Hall, which he had erected for their benefit, on a piece of ground close to his own gate. He had often felt sorry that since commencing his public career as an evangelist his time had been so thoroughly occupied, and his strength so utterly exhausted by his labours in the large centres of population, whose claims upon him he rightly felt to be of the first importance, that when he returned to his home he was obliged to take entire rest, so as to recuperate his physical energy, and fit

himself for a new campaign of exciting and exhausting services.

He felt, however, that his poorer neighbours in Bishopmill had claims upon him, some of them being too aged and infirm to go to the regular services of the sanctuary in the adjoining town of Elgin, and others having lapsed into indifference and non-church-attendance; and he knew that these could only be reclaimed by having the gospel brought to their own doors. Accordingly, not possessing the means himself, he resolved to make an effort among his personal friends to raise a sum of money sufficient to build a hall, that would be available at all times for missionary, evangelistic, and Sabbath-school purposes, and for holding meetings for mothers, workers, savings banks, etc. After eighteen months' effort, the requisite amount was raised, the ground purchased, the Hall built, and handed over to trustees, for behoof of the community, to be administered by them conformably to a deed of trust which he drew up. The trustees whom he appointed were earnest Christian men representing the different Presbyterian Churches, Mr. North himself representing the English Episcopalian Church.

A large and influential gathering of friends assembled in the Hall on the day of its opening, among whom were the Earl of Kintore, to whom evangelical religion in Scotland owes much, and many of the leading people in Elgin, who took an interest in the Lord's work. The following account of the proceed-

ings is from the *Elgin and Morayshire Courier* of August 12, 1870. On rising to address the audience, Mr. North, said—

"He hoped to have many opportunities of addressing meetings on those subjects for which he had specially built the Hall; but he thought that at present he should, perhaps, better please the audience, and also perhaps do more good, if he gave a plain and simple statement of why he built the Hall, how it had been built, and what he proposed in the future to do with it. For some years he had a desire to do something of the sort; but he had a difficulty, and the difficulty in his heart was this, how far he could get the clergy to work with him. He was perfectly convinced that with them an evangelist got an enormous advantage. He did not like to say it was impossible to do good without the clergy, for God was sovereign, and He would do what He willed; but he would rather run away to another place, and try to do good where the clergy would go with him, than set up in opposition to the clergy. But he had found the greatest kindness and sympathy from the clergy in this matter. He addressed a note to all the evangelical clergy in the town to attend that meeting to-night, and from all these he had received exceedingly kind answers. Some were present, and some had been prevented from attending; but all wished success to the building." Mr. North then stated that for the first time in his life he was going to read his address from paper, and continued,—

"Being desirous to erect a Mission Hall for the good of the district, I stated the matter in the first place to a large congregation in the Free Assembly Hall, Edinburgh, and afterwards to my personal friends. The response that I received was more than gratifying, and in a very short time after my appeal, I received, from different sources, more than

the £700 I asked. I immediately bought the old granary, at a cost of £280, and coming home in August last year, began to build. I soon found, however, that my gift would be very incomplete, unless I could add to it the cottage and garden which we have now got at the back of the Hall. For some time I had great difficulty about this; for, unless I applied to the same friends again, I knew not where to get the money. It was painful, but I had either to do it or give up the cottage and garden, and at length I wrote and put the matter before some of the most influential of my former subscribers. Since then I have received about £300, making in all £1030 15s. collected. In consequence of the furniture for platform, ante-rooms, etc., and a few other extra items, the whole cost will exceed that sum by about £40. I thank God for what He has enabled me to do, and deliver over this property—Hall, ante-hall, cottage and garden, free of all debt—into the hands of the trustees, for the use and behoof of the people of Bishopmill. Moreover, the cottage and garden now produce, and are likely to continue to produce, an annual rental of £15 per annum, which is settled as a perpetual endowment on the Hall, to be employed by the trustees for its necessary expenses, and the overplus, if any, as they (the trustees) may think best for the benefit of the people of Bishopmill. Moreover, I have collected some volumes of religious and other useful books, which will form the beginning of a small library, and ordered a large bookcase for the ante-hall; and Mr. Jenkinson, of Edinburgh, has very kindly promised three hundred strong cups and saucers, with the letters B. M. H. (Bishopmill Hall), and all the requisites for the set, as a gift to be always in readiness for us when we feel inclined to give our young people a tea-party. And now as to the rules and regulations by which the trustees are to be guided.

Regulations for the Hall.

"1. Services for spiritual exhortation and instruction are to be held in this Hall both by clerical and lay-preachers and teachers, and the trustees are particularly requested to see that there is always a service on Sabbath evenings. 2. This Hall will be open for the use of the Bishopmill undenominational Sabbath schools, and I am happy to hear that there are about a hundred and thirty children ready to take possession next Sabbath. It is a great comfort to me to hear that, if this little Hall does nothing else, it will save £5 a year to the school, for they will pay nothing for this place in all time coming. May God bless them, and send them teachers after His own heart. 3. Persons of all evangelical denominations shall be at liberty to teach and preach in this Hall, providing always that they hold and preach the following fundamental doctrines:—

Doctrines to be Preached in the Hall.

"(1) That man is by nature totally depraved and lost, born in sin, a child of wrath, and until born again of the Spirit, led captive by Satan at his will. (2) That man is wholly unable by any resolutions, efforts, or strength of his own, either in whole or in part, to extricate, help, or save himself, or make himself spiritually better. (3) That God was manifest in the flesh, and that Christ Jesus, very God and very man, came into the world to save sinners. (4) That Christ Jesus saves sinners by taking their sins and giving them His righteousness, so that He by our sins imputed to Him was made sin for us, and we by His righteousness imputed to us are made the righteousness of God in Him; that Christ got what the sinner deserved, death, while the sinner believing in Him, gets for that death's sake the pardon for all his sins, and the gift of God which is eternal life. (5) That though

the death and righteousness of Christ are free to all, so that any and every sinner, even the chief, is welcome, no one will receive this salvation who is not taught by the Spirit of God. (6) That God will give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. (7) That man cannot be saved in whole or in part by his own works, but by faith in Christ only. (8) That faith without works is dead: and (9) That while no person shall be allowed to teach in these premises anything contrary to any of the doctrines of the Shorter Catechism, it shall not be necessary that such person shall hold and teach all the doctrines of the said Catechism, so long as he holds and teaches the fundamental doctrines above stated.

"Now these fundamental truths I embody in the title-deeds of this Hall, to keep in all time coming what I believe to be soundness in the faith. The man who has got up this Hall, Brownlow North, believes these doctrines himself, he believes they are necessary for salvation, and he cannot, if he can hinder it, ever allow anything else to be preached but what he believes to be necessary to salvation.

"I do not build this Hall for the purpose of religious argument and controversy about deep or disputed doctrine. I build this place that the wayfaring man, though a fool, may understand; that the word of salvation to poor sinners may be set forth, in all time coming, in its simplicity. The Hall and ante-hall also may be used at the discretion of the trustees, not only for religious purposes, but for purposes they consider really instructive and beneficial; but never for concerts, penny readings, or such-like, whose object is only pastime and amusement. There are plenty of other places for such objects. I do not enter into the question whether it is right or wrong to go to such places; but this house was not built for such purposes, and therefore I set my face against them here; but for anything which, in the judgment of the trustees, is calculated to do good, with all

my heart and soul I give it. But not for mere things which lead us to forget God. Pastime! Do you ever think of the meaning of the word 'pastime'? Do you know how long you have got to live? To a moment I can tell you—you have got to live as long as God lives. And do you know how long time you have given you to prepare for that eternity which is before you? You have just got as long as you live in this world; and only think what a spendthrift that man is—what a squanderer that man is—who spends time in pastime! The difference between an unconverted and a converted man is this, that one endeavours to spend his time pleasurably, and the other profitably. It is to help you to spend time profitably that I have tried to get up this Hall. It will also be enacted that while one of the objects of the Hall is that mothers' meetings, clothing and other useful societies, occasional tea-parties with fruit, etc., accompanied with religious or useful lectures, (and I think I may add, the weekly meetings of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society,) may be held in it, that never, on any pretence whatever, shall the use of tobacco, wine, beer, spirits, or other intoxicating liquors be permitted. Before I sit down, I will take this opportunity of returning my heartfelt thanks to those friends who have put it in my power to present you with this proof of my interest in you. I have already told you how generously and quickly those friends responded to my call. May God, for Jesus Christ's sake, bless them and you, and Bishopmill Hall."

After an address from the Rev. Mr. Traill, who highly lauded the Christian enterprise which was that day inaugurated, and commended the catholicity, the high Christian principle, and the appreciation of the needs of the age, that were manifested in the drawing up of the trust deed, Lord Kintore said,—

"He regretted that Lord Polwarth had been unable to take the chair that evening, from the pressure of family affliction; and had it been the will of the Lord to spare a most honoured and saintly evangelist—dear Arndilly, gone to his rest—he was sure it would have given him great pleasure to have presided. Part of the host had crossed the stream, and part were crossing. Now before the throne of Jesus he was praising God that down here one more effort was being made for the spread of the everlasting gospel in their midst. He congratulated Mr. North on what he saw at that meeting. He was one of his dearest, his best, his most honoured and loved friends. As he looked upon his efforts in the past, and saw them in the present, he was perfectly sure that the topstone of all his friend's efforts was the crowning of the Lord Jesus Lord of all. The noble Earl then delivered a very impressive discourse on John xiv. 6, 'I am the truth.'"

The proceedings were closed by the Rev. Mr. Pringle engaging in prayer.

One of the trustees residing in Elgin, Mr. Gall, writes under date 14th January, 1873:—

"As regards the Hall at Bishopmill, it answers the purpose for which it was erected, and is very useful in the district. A mother's meeting, and a prayer-meeting are held during the week, and on Sabbath a children's service, a Sabbath school, and service in the evening. The minister of the Parish preaches once a month in it, and the minister of the Free High Church has undertaken to do the same. The other services are conducted or arranged by the trustees and are undenominational."

Thus, both in the starting of a town-missionary and the building of a Mission Hall, was Mr. North the

means of conferring signal spiritual advantages upon the town where he for many years resided. These institutions will, we trust, bear fruit for generations yet to come.

A few months after this, when it was known that Mr. North had somewhat unexpectedly, both to himself and others, formed the resolution of changing his place of stated residence to London, the inhabitants of Bishopmill and its neighbourhood drew up and presented to him an Address, of which the following is a copy.

MEMORIAL TO BROWNLOW NORTH, ESQ., FROM THE INHABITANTS OF BISHOPMILL.

"We, the undersigned inhabitants of Bishopmill and vicinity, hereby tender to Mr. North our warmest thanks for the deep interest which he has taken in the temporal and spiritual welfare of this community.

"We thank him most sincerely for the new Mission Hall, now an ornament to our village, and an invaluable treasure to us; a monument to the faithful, loving, and devoted spirit of Mr. North, whose sacrifices in rearing the same are only known to himself, and the benefit which we and others shall derive from it shall, perhaps, only be fully realised in eternity.

"We believe that it is the intention of Mr. North to remove from our midst, at which we are exceedingly sorry; and should it be possible to reverse his intention, we take this opportunity of humbly making the attempt, in the hope that he will not despise nor reject our appeal, but that he will give it his careful consideration, that he will think of the many who will be deprived of waiting upon his ministry,

of hearing his familiar voice uttering the glad tidings of great joy in our own little village.

"We earnestly hope that he will continue to display the same interest in our well-being which he has hitherto done, that he will yet go in and out amongst us for many a day, encouraging and being encouraged to continue in wisdom's ways, 'which are ways of pleasantness, and all whose paths are peace.'"

The Address, closing with a request for the mounting of a bell upon the Hall, has signatures appended to it to the number of 502.

This gratifying memorial was conveyed to him on the 12th of January, 1871, along with a letter in which it is stated that "this petition is the result of a deep sorrow experienced by his removal, and that the hearty response received from the villagers is unprecedented, each one being more anxious than another to adhibit his name."

Mr. North, however, adhered to his intention of removing to London, but the Christian lady who became his successor has always continued to take a deep interest in the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, which lay so near his heart.

During these years of hard and incessant work he often suffered a great deal from ill-health; and it shows the intense energy and earnestness of the man, that though now upwards of sixty years of age, he still undertook and carried through such an amount of exhausting labour. A letter to Lord Kintore a year or two before he left Elgin shows that he felt

the increasing infirmities of age telling upon his frame.

"THE KNOLL, ELGIN, *Oct.* 31*st.*

"MY VERY DEAR KINTORE,—It is always a pleasant post that brings me a line from either of you.

"Though better, I have had several of the sciatic attacks I had, and was obliged to send an excuse on Saturday to Inverness, where I was to have preached on Sunday. To-day is our fast day here; and though I am better, I am not able to leave the house, yet hope to get down to the Lord's table on Sunday. I suspect it is the Lord's will, if my years are lengthened, that they be years of suffering. Glory be to God! May they be years of improvement to my own soul's good, and of patient enduring to the glory of Christ. I have grown far too earthly-minded of late. Be sure that God's best blessing to man is *not* freedom from earthly care and trouble. With all this, however, I feel the Knoll is very pretty, and I am longing for you to see it again.

"We have got a minister who is filling our church. I have a carriage from the inn, and go regularly to the weekly prayer-meeting.

"God bless you. God bless my lady. God bless your children!

"Your always affectionate friend,

"B. N."

The last five years of his life were very much a repetition of the year of which we have been able to give a pretty full diary.

In the spring of 1873 he visited the fashionable watering-place of Bournemouth, and his addresses there seem to have been owned by the great Master.

He wrote from his own house in London on his return,—

"Such a whirl at Bournemouth, yet I believe it was a very blessed time. The dear old baron with whom I was staying certainly seemed to get good. The last morning at prayers he wept like a child, and said afterwards, 'Oh, you naughty man, you have made me cry. I had left that to my wife;' and then, on a large tray of beautiful flowers being brought into the room, he said, 'Ah, they are very beautiful; but it is North that has strewed my path with flowers.' To God be all the glory! His was only one case of many. I came here on Saturday, to preach for Saphir last Sunday. The church was very full, and the people attentive. I preach for him again, God willing, next Sunday, and on the Sunday following at Cambridge."

These services in the Rev. Adolph Saphir's church were not fruitless, for among his correspondents we find a long letter of gratitude from one in her youth, who was then brought within the safe and blessed enclosure of the fold of grace. She says,—

"Indeed I am wonderfully happy and blessed in my new and precious possession, and trying to make everybody I meet be the same. Oh the joy you will have in heaven, when many, many point to you as the means of their conversion! How I pray that I may never be cast away! I am learning a great deal of my precious Bible now. Six weeks ago was to me the beginning of days, when you preached in Mr. Saphir's in the evening. It was then I determined to give up, God helping me, my whole heart to Jesus Christ."

Two letters from Mr. North to this young convert will be found in chapter viii., at pp. 211, 213.

LAST YEAR OF EARTHLY LABOUR IN GLASGOW.

"Yet at the bidding of his Lord,
He casts that net again;
His strength, the warrant of His word,
His prize, the souls of men.
And day and night he seeks to win,
While sinks and swells life's tide,
Out of the troubled depths of sin,
Souls for which Jesus died.
The teeming net will yield at length,
For labours long and hard,
For broken health and vanished strength,
More than its full reward.
In life's deep waters, o'er its shoals,
Spread henceforth nevermore,
The net is broken; but the souls
Are gathered in to shore."

JOHN S. B. MONSELL, LL.D.

"My mouth shall show forth Thy righteousnessand Thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof."—PSALM lxxi. 15.

XVII.

THE greater part of the last two years of Mr. North's life was devoted to evangelistic work in the great city of Glasgow. This city contains such a vast and rapidly increasing population as to more than overtask the utmost efforts of all the churches to meet its spiritual necessities. According to the latest estimates, the number of non-churchgoing people in that teeming home of industry and commerce falls not very far short of a quarter of a million; and as multitudes of these belong not to the sunken and pauperised, but to the prosperous and intelligent artisan classes, it is clear that the desideratum is powerful preachers of the gospel as much as places of worship. For after all, it is the preachers, and not the churches or the ritual, that must attract, and arouse, and convert the people.

* We may certainly regard it as a mark of God's kindness to our honoured friend that, in 1874-75, he was permitted to reap another harvest of rich blessing before being called to his rest. No doubt it fell to

* The early pages of this chapter have been kindly contributed by the Rev. W. Ross Taylor, of Glasgow, an intimate and valued friend of Mr. North.

the lot of other labourers to take the place of chief prominence in connection with the extensive and memorable movement of that time; but in his case also large opportunities for evangelistic work presented themselves, and his efforts were crowned with results which vividly recalled to his gladdened heart the experiences of earlier years. Friends did not know at the time that it was the sunset hour with him; they hoped that further years of usefulness were still in store; but afterwards, when the end came, they could not but observe with gratitude, even while the pain of bereavement was at their hearts, that his course had closed as it commenced, amid the warmth and glow of earnest and successful work.

Mr. North was at this time far from physically strong. He was constantly suffering more or less from liability to chills, and from a feeling of exhaustion; but his spirit was as intense as ever, and he threw himself into the work of the revival with all the enthusiasm of his powerful nature. The feeling of weakness which weighed upon him at other times vanished as soon as he found himself face to face with a congregation of eager listeners; and no stranger witnessing the energy with which he preached for fully an hour, could imagine how carefully he required to husband his strength before going into the pulpit, or how "done" he felt after the service was over. The conviction was indeed forcing itself upon his mind, that he would require to curtail the number of his weekly services, but he was most re-

luctant to accept the thought, and battled against it to the last.

In the earlier months of 1874, while Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey were holding their wonderful meetings in the various districts of Glasgow, Mr. North was at work in the large and populous suburbs which girdle that city,—Govan, Partick, and Hillhead. Reports of the remarkable results which followed the meetings in Govan were given at the time at the daily noon meetings, and tended greatly to encourage the hearts of God's children to abound in prayer for a large blessing. Of the work in the west-end suburb of Hillhead it is my privilege to speak from full personal knowledge, as the meetings were all held in Kelvinside Free Church, and extended over the entire month of March. On the first Sabbath of that month, Mr. Moody occupied the pulpit in the forenoon, and in view of the services in which the veteran evangelist was about to engage, strove to arouse the Christians among us to earnest co-operation, by preaching his powerful sermon on the text, "To every man his work." Mr. North followed in the evening, and preached to an overflowing congregation on "The rich man and Lazarus;" a sermon with which he frequently commenced a series of services, as being eminently fitted to awaken spiritual anxiety, where previously indifference had reigned. And not a few in his audience that night felt their hearts tremble as they listened to his solemn and fervid words, and of these a number remained in their seats at the close

of the service, to ask the old question of stricken hearts, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

During the weeks which followed, greatly encouraged and strengthened by the beginning which had been made, Mr. North occupied the pulpit on three evenings of each week, and preached to large congregations with rare freshness and power. There were words for all classes of hearers, for the thoughtless and the thoughtful, for the presumptuous and the doubting, for the enquiring and the enlightened, for the babes and those of mature experience; and speaker and hearers alike were sensible that the living energy of the Spirit was with the word. At one time the realities of the unseen world were portrayed with overpowering vividness; at another the loving calls of Christ were urged with persuasive tenderness; at another the absolute sufficiency of God's word, as the ground of faith, was so clearly unfolded as to dispel many long lingering doubts and misconceptions; while on other evenings, choosing Psalms for his theme, the preacher analysed with admirable insight, the varied states of feeling experienced by the people of God. Many of the evangelistic or arousing addresses I had heard him deliver in other places, and I was prepared for those features of vivid representation, direct appeal, and intense urgency which always characterised them; but the addresses on the Psalms were new to me, and I was greatly struck by the richness of his exposition. He appeared himself also to have special pleasure in

dwelling on these themes, although he never seemed to lose the very groundless impression that his one talent was to awaken the unconcerned. Hence it was under something like a mental protest that he allowed himself to indulge in the treatment of those topics which were becoming the most congenial to his ripening spirit, and hence too he selected those psalms only out of which he could unfold, sometimes ingeniously enough, his favourite doctrine of "righteousness through faith."

At the close of each Sabbath evening service, a large number, about four or five hundred, remained to continue in prayer for a blessing; and at the close of these second meetings, enquirers remained in increasing numbers to get further guidance from those who waited to converse with them. There is good reason to believe that many of these were enabled to yield themselves truly to Christ, and in the course of pastoral visitation I found that others, who did not wait as enquirers, shared in the same blessing. It was altogether a memorable harvest time."

During the same winter Mr. North held services in the Barony Church, and concerning these the Rev. James Wells, its esteemed pastor, writes to us :—

"In the winter of 1874, Mr. North conducted a series of meetings in the Barony Free Church. His addresses then seemed to me the best I had ever heard from him, and justified the statement Dr. Duncan used to make, that he had a fine theological mind. Along with all the freshness and glowing

intensity that marked his first public appeals, his utterances had a peculiar richness and mellowness. Some of his expositions of Scripture were very striking. I remember that he had a great desire to reach the hard-headed men; and, so far as I could judge, his success was chiefly among that class. I had satisfactory evidence that several of them were then brought to personal decision."

During this period of labour in Glasgow, as Mr. Taylor has noticed, Mr. North came into contact with Mr. D. L. Moody, of Chicago. Mr. Moody was at this time the centre of attraction, so that Mr. North, whose name had been wont to ring through any city in which he had come to labour, was not even known by many Christian people in Glasgow to have been steadily preaching for about a year in their city. His work was quieter than formerly, but his labours appear to have been not less fruitful. But what we desire to call attention to, is the entire absence of anything approaching to jealousy in this honoured man of God, when he found himself, for perhaps the first time in his experience, not forgotten at all by the Master, but to a certain extent overlooked by the crowd. Mr. Moody had everything in his favour. He had the excitement of novelty, of Mr. Sankey's beautiful voice, of instrumental music, and of sacred songs, both the words and melodies of which had a great attractiveness, and all the charm of freshness. He had a marvellous faculty for organisation, which Mr. North lacked, and the Lord was making him

the instrument of a very widespread revival movement. As a theologian and preacher, however, Mr. Moody would be the first to acknowledge that Mr. North was greatly in advance of him. We all know how common it is for men in the position in which Mr. North unexpectedly found himself to judge somewhat harshly of those who have the flood-tide in their favour. But his heart was filled with joy at seeing such true and successful reapers busy wielding the sickle; and in private notes to his most intimate friends he expressed his happiness at witnessing the Lord's work thus carried on by others who were drawing away the popular eye from his own labours; and he who had been accustomed to stand first proved his meetness for that honour by being most willing when called upon to take the lowest room. The Lord was thus preparing for His own presence His servant, to whom he was about to address the invitation, "Come up higher."

A letter written to his old friend the Earl of Kintore, from Liverpool, where he had come for a short time during Mr. Moody's visit there, shows his own sense of the precarious character of his bodily health, and also his opinion of Moody and Sankey.

"SANDFIELD PARK, WEST DERBY,
"LIVERPOOL, *March 4th.*

"MY DEAREST KINTORE,—I was very glad to get your two kind letters, as was Mrs. H——. I am getting older and uglier and deafer every year, not

attractions with which to make new friends, so I am more jealous of the old ones, and I should be sorry to lose many of them if I could help it, and none more so than yourself, dear Kintore, for we have travelled together as friends over many a long year of good report and evil report. My ending, I suspect, is not very far off, for I am full of gout and rheumatism, added to which Sir William Gull, whom I consulted, says I have a weak heart and enlarged liver. Notwithstanding all this, however, I had accepted an invitation to speak in the enormous hall here, built for Moody and Sankey, on next Sunday, but fortunately for Liverpool and myself, they are not ready for them in London, and we have got them here for another Sunday. Their success is a miracle, perfectly superhuman! Every service crammed, and after every service the inquiry room also. Of course the devil rages, as he always does when God works: and He *is* working, I most firmly believe, *mightily*. I cannot tell you how sorry I am to hear of dear —— being such an invalid.

The whole household are gone in to hear Moody and Sankey, or I am sure would send you every kind message. I am sipping barley-water in single blessedness. I am so glad to hear —— got such a blessing from M. and S. May the Lord increase it more and more! for she has had much trial lately.

"Always and ever yours most affectionately,

"BROWNLOW NORTH."

We shall next record an instance of blessing in which the beginning and the close of this good workman's sowing the seed of life were linked together in a wise and watchful providence.

After one of his services in the Free Church of Sighthill, Glasgow, a young man came into the vestry, and thanked Mr. North, with the tear in his eye, for having been the instrument of his conversion in another church in the city some months previously. He then related to Mr. North the substance of the following statement, which we are enabled to give in his own words.

He says,—"On the Sabbath in question I called to see a young friend at the south side of Glasgow. Conversation getting stale, I proposed a walk to pass the time. We passed Mr. Riddel's church: my friend told me that Mr. North was preaching, so I said, 'Let's go in.' I may remark that my friend had very serious views on religion. Mr. North preached from the words, 'Jesus Christ, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.' I came away from the church no better than I entered it, save that I had got one idea from the sermon. And reasoning with myself, I came to the conclusion that up to the present time I had been a 'fool,' and that Jesus Christ was to me but 'foolishness.' My friend offered to accompany me a part of the way home, and as we were crossing the Clyde I felt as if all the powers of hell had put their heads together to tempt me: so strong were my feelings, that I stopped on the bridge, and

said to myself, 'This matter must be settled, either the one way or the other, before I cross this river.' I heard the jeers already in my ears from my mocking companions, and the scoffs of the world, but by the grace of God I was enabled to view the two sides of the question, and I decided for God. And no sooner had I done so, than joy which words cannot express filled my heart. My companion noticed the change, and I explained to him the cause. I felt so light, that I did not feel my feet touch the ground. By the grace of God I can say that Jesus Christ is still to me 'the wisdom and the power of God.'"

When he had related this to Mr. North, he told him he was the son of a minister in Morayshire, who had asked him to preach to his people at the very beginning of his career, but had himself been removed by death before the dawn of the Sabbath fixed on, three weeks later. That service had been a solemn one, the crowds being such that they had to adjourn to the open air. Mr. North had spoken to the people with great feeling, on the death of their revered pastor, whose recent removal caused many to weep tears of heartfelt sorrow. Sixteen years had elapsed since then. The Lord had guided his servant's son, now training as an engineer in Glasgow, to hear the gospel, and be brought to the saving knowledge of Christ by the lips of this very evangelist, whose course was now nearly finished.

Mr. North was much overcome at the recital, and as a friend who was present was about to assist him

on with his top-coat, he took it from him, and handing it to the young convert, said, "Let my *child* help me on with it."

It was not Mr. North's habit to remain in the church or vestry after preaching to converse with anxious inquirers at an after-meeting. He preferred to see them the following day; his reason being that he was so heated and exhausted by the exertion of preaching, that he was liable to be chilled, unless he returned home at once. In the year 1872-3, when assisting Mr. Riddell in Glasgow, being specially asked, he stayed to converse with some inquirers one evening, the consequence being that he caught a chill, was confined to bed next day with what turned out a severe and painful outbreak of boils. But when the hour of his next advertised service came, he rose from bed, wrapped up well, got into a cab, and being unable to sit, was conveyed to the church kneeling on the carriage floor. He stood from the time he entered the pulpit till he left it, occasionally resting one knee on a seat placed beside him, returned home in the cab in the same position, and got into bed. Finding that the Lord was blessing his word, in spite of all dissuasion, and of his own weakness and pain, he pursued the same plan thrice a week till the month of services he had arranged for in that church was concluded. Some persons blamed Mr. North for undue care and pampering of himself, and reference has been made to this in the contributions inserted

from several of his friends, in their desire to be perfectly impartial in estimating his character. But that this little failing was greatly exaggerated by many, this authentic incident will show. For how many ministers in the prime of their vigour would endure so much discomfort and pain to fulfil their calling? and Mr. North, with a weakened frame, was now over sixty-three years of age.

The physician who saw him on his death-bed said that his heart was in such a state that he might at any time have dropped down in the pulpit, and from Sir William Gull's opinion he was fully aware that that organ was seriously affected. Yet so anxious was he to fulfil his ministry, that he preached often when physically unable for the effort.

As an evidence of the widespread fruits of his ministry, a friend has told us that when he was staying in her house in Edinburgh on one occasion for six weeks, not a single day passed in which the bell did not ring, bearing a message of thanks to him, either by word of mouth or by letter, for his having been the means of bringing the speaker or writer to the knowledge of the Saviour. Even in localities in which Mr. North never preached, not a few instances of conversion under his ministrations have been traced. It was so in the village of Moffat, in Dumfriesshire, where, a few months before Mr. North's decease, the writer of this volume came, within a short interval, upon two persons who spoke of him as their spiritual father. The first was a gentleman who was

passing through, lecturing upon Sabbath-school work, in which he had extensive experience, and who mentioned that he had been converted and brought to the Lord under Mr. North in Edinburgh, in Free St. Luke's, in 1858. The second was a young domestic servant encountered in pastoral visitation, whose bright smile and ready answer to some question about the state of her soul, told that her heart had been given to Jesus. When asked if it was long since she had known the Lord as her Saviour, she said it was only a few months since she had been brought to Christ under Mr. North, in Kelvinside Church, Glasgow, in the beginning of 1875.

One of the last letters we have found in his repositories, apart from those of personal friends, was addressed to him by an English gentleman in the autumn of this year, 1875, thanking him for his prayers with his wife after a carriage accident at Tarbet, and for an exposition he had given of John v. at that place, and also for instruction and help they had both derived from reading one of his books which he had kindly presented to them. Thus his useful and busy life drew to its close, filled with work for the Saviour who had bought him with a price, and who, when He came suddenly, found His servant at his post, distributing to friends and strangers, in public and in private, a portion of spiritual meat in due season.

REMINISCENCES OF BROWNLOW NORTH

BY PERSONAL FRIENDS.

"I sing of him that rests below,
And, since the grasses round me wave,
I take the grasses of the grave,
And make them pipes whereon to blow."

"I cannot see the features right,
When on the gloom I strive to paint
The face I know; the hues are faint,
And mix with hollow masks of night."

IN MEMORIAM.

"How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! I am distressed for thee, my brother: very pleasant hast thou been unto me."— 2 SAM. i. 25, 26.

XVIII.

Reminiscences communicated by Admiral Baillie Hamilton.

"Macartney House, Greenwich Park,
"*March*, 1878.

"My dear Sir,—In accordance with your wish, I send you an outline of the view I would take of Brownlow North's character;—my imperfect sketch of the man himself.

Amongst its most striking features was an intensity of purpose and force of will,—earnest and strenuous in whatever cause; and never more earnest than in that cause for which he eventually lived, and in devotion to which he died.

I knew him in the days when he was the leader of '*fast-life*' in Aberdeen, the prime mover in every 'sport,' whether it were the 'match' at riding (he was a bold, first-rate horseman), the after-dinner revelry, or the midnight play; in the days, too, at the Dallas shootings, where 'play' stole far into the night, until that memorable night, when suddenly stricken by an unseen but irresistible power, Brownlow North left the card-table a changed man! And yet the same. That nature which is never eradicated, however subordinated to a higher impulse and a nobler will, still clung to him, and was now to assert itself with all its native force and determination, in a devotion to the service of a new master. Turning his back on his former self, he at once returned to those scenes where his late life was best known; and braving scorn and shame, proclaimed with

characteristic fearlessness and with great ability the faith which he had once despised.

As I have already observed, his powerful will and native force of character were shown in every action; he could do nothing by halves, and whatever he did he did well. None more forward than he in promoting the cheerfulness and amusements of others, as well as in endeavours for their spiritual good. Those who have shared in his hospitality, have felt the full meaning of 'genial and generous.' Was there a scheme for a day's pleasure,—some excursion, whether of interest, or research, or simple enjoyment;—who was the life and promoter of it, and whose the arrangements that left nothing to be desired to make the day's happiness perfect? And those evenings at the Knoll at Elgin! And if the evenings were enjoyable, it should be remembered to whom most of the enjoyment was owing. Brownlow North was happy in the invaluable blessing of a loving, devoted, self-denying wife; the ready sharer in his cares, his aid and help, and the capable and untiring mistress of his household.

And still I am led on to speak of the *man*. It was the combination of the two natures, the thoroughly human with the true Christian, that presented him to my mind as so remarkable a person, and hence the difficulty of attempting to crystallize or to gather into focus so many-sided a character. For undoubtedly it comprised seeming contradictions; and yet such as are sure (I had almost said are of necessity) to be found wherever a powerful influence has been manifested. Probably it needed a character, multiform as that of Brownlow North, to move that body of eminent men who at that time composed the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland to confer upon him the privilege and right to preach in their churches; an act so special and exceptional, as to constitute an incident in that Church's history, whilst

in connection with this incident it should be borne in mind that, in addition to great natural talent and power of imagination, he had all the advantage of a liberal education and a cultivated understanding, and that even in his wildest days these advantages had never been neglected.

Just as there are those now living who have heard him say there was no one who had known him so long as myself, so it follows that the entire man and the whole life must be present to me, and that I find it difficult to separate its parts, and to dwell on one phase of it more than another. I know how imperfect any sketch that I may attempt to draw of it must be; but in referring to the impression left upon me, I can only say that his was at once the character that drew to it the love of many, that he never lost a friendship worth the possession, nor a confidence once inspired; and if ever a jar occurred with those he esteemed, it arose out of an inflexible purpose on his part to take the side which seemed to him for good.

And if I do not speak of his works, any more than of his conversions, it is not that they are the less regarded by me. His many published writings may be reckoned amongst those works; they, at least, speak, whilst he would say of them, 'yet not to *my* praise.'

In letting my mind wander over the varied life I had known so long, the question has occurred to me, how much of the ultimate leading of that life may be attributable to the early teaching and prayers of a gifted and pious mother? He ever spoke of her with touching reverence and affection, and her memory was to him most precious.

His life was indeed a true life, for it was true to self and to nature; and hence no greater instance is needed in proof of that of which he was the living and dying advocate and example, 'the work of faith with power.'

"W. B. HAMILTON (Admiral)."

Reminiscences by Francis Brown-Douglas, Esq.

"In the autumn of 1857 I had the privilege of making the acquaintance of Mr. Brownlow North,—an acquaintance which ripened into friendship,—a friendship upon which I look back with much thankfulness. It was at Clova in Aberdeenshire, where, with my family, I had gone with my much-loved relative, Mr. Christie of Durie, for a season of grouse-shooting. I think Mr. North had been staying at Arndilly, and either there or at Huntly Lodge, Dr. Moody-Stuart, of whose congregation we were members, had met him. He came to pay us a short visit, and was accompanied by Mr. North, whom he thus kindly introduced to us. It was in the middle of the day they arrived. We were just going to luncheon, and I shall never forget the conversation at this meal, in which Mr. North took a prominent part. I was struck with his manliness and intelligence, but chiefly with his intense earnestness, and his realization of eternity. He spoke a good deal on being filled with the Spirit, but he did so like a man who knew by experience and enjoyment what this was, and I think all who were present felt their responsibility, as he told us a Christian filled with the Spirit could not help manifesting this; for, as he said in his own expressive way, out of him would flow 'rivers of living water.' The passage of Scripture in which this expression occurs (John vii. 38) was the chief subject of conversation.

When Mr. Christie returned from the moor, he was introduced to Mr. North. Being a thorough sportsman, and knowing Mr. North's former love for grouse-shooting, he spoke to him about the day's sport, and said how rejoiced he was to meet a man whom he knew to be so much in earnest. Mr. North entered a little into the conversation, and told how often he had stalked the grouse, and hidden himself for hours that he might get a shot at them, but

that he wished he had been as anxious in the gaining of souls to Christ.

In the evening we went to the Free Church at Lumsden, where Mr. North addressed a crowded meeting. On his way there, he spoke of the difference between this and his last visit to Clova, whence he had driven with a large party to a ball in a neighbour's house. He left us next day. Some of our party accompanied him to Gartly station; his conversation was almost entirely on spiritual subjects, solemn, earnest, but lively also, and natural; and I well remember noticing the cast of his mind when we referred to a Christian friend who, when he had once taken his position was not easily moved from it. 'I understand,' he said, 'not all the king's horses nor all the king's men,' etc."

Mr. Brown-Douglas then gives his recollections of Mr. North's first evangelistic visit to Edinburgh, which are inserted in chapter iii., pp. 110—114, and continues:—

"I had many opportunities of fellowship with Mr. North since that time, and he paid us several visits from year to year. His custom was to remain in his room during the early part of the day. In these morning hours he prepared some of his well-known books and tracts; and when he joined the family circle, he would tell us with remarkable vividness the subject which had occupied his thoughts. In the afternoon he came to the drawing-room and took his share in the occupations and even in the amusements of the family. At one time he became fond of chess, and played a game almost daily. He used to provoke our hearty laughter by the manner of his start when his young opponent played a move with the knight, and by his exclamation, which he was fond of repeating, 'I do so dislike these "hoppies"— they are always surprising me.'

His habit was to conduct our family worship in the evening. This was done in a manner singularly pleasant

and profitable. His exposition of Scripture showed he was a man of genius, with deep knowledge of human nature, and who had made a study of the Bible. His application of the truth was remarkably direct, and his prayers were full, though simple; short, so as not to weary; direct, as if speaking to God. He repeated the same thought on different evenings, but with freshness and new illustrations.

I could not say that the keen edge so evident at our first meeting remained altogether unblunted, or that there continued always the same earnest personal dealing with souls which had been so blessed in the early part of his Christian life; nor am I persuaded that Mr. North's usefulness was as in the days of his early strength; but this I can truly say, his addresses from the pulpit had lost none of their force; they were full and faithful as ever, expounding the gospel, and warning sinners to flee from the wrath to come; and most assuredly no one could be with Mr. North in his later years without seeing how, with all his faults and failings, (from which, who of us is free?) failings to which from his early career he was specially prone, and to overcome which he needed special grace, he had grown greatly in Bible knowledge, in exact statement of Bible truth, and in a simple trust in the work and grace, and above all the substitution, of Jesus Christ for the sinner.

The last time I saw him was a few weeks before his death. He was in Edinburgh for the day, and called on us. He spoke of one of our younger children who was rather a favourite of his. She had been delicate, and he said how glad he was to see her improving, adding in his own amusing way, 'You must have shut her up in a glass case, and kept every cold breath of wind from blowing upon her.' This was in allusion to a habit of his own, which he had somewhat grown into, of nursing himself very carefully when suffering from cold, and about which we used playfully to

rebuke him. After one of his usual bright pleasant hours spent in conversation, he spoke of seeing us again, and visiting us in the summer, but that was not to be. We heard of his short illness and unexpected death with much concern, for we were all greatly attached to him. His loss has left a blank, which personally we deeply feel, and which a large circle of friends vividly realize. We shall hear his stirring words no more at the Perth Conferences, and in other places where he was so helpful and so greatly honoured; but we have recourse to the prayer of old, 'Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men!'"

Reminiscences by James Balfour, Esq.

"During my friendship with Mr. North, which began in 1857 and lasted till it was closed by his death, I have seen him in all variety of relationships and circumstances—as a private Christian, as a public preacher, as a spiritual guide dealing with souls, in social worship, in society (whether in his own house or in the houses of mutual friends), in personal intercourse and in business, as well as in the closing hours of his life. In all these he was no ordinary man.

The reality of his own conversion was testified to by a changed life. After his conversion he did not indeed become perfect, and some of the traits of his early character would manifest themselves now and again, as indeed they do in all Christians, but the change was very marked. The many proofs of it which have already been given in this biography may be summed up in this—from being a lover of pleasure he became a lover of God.

It was remarkable after this striking change how the world seemed to cast him off, and indeed to hunt him down. The secret of this was that not only had the world been crucified to him, but he had been crucified to the world; so they

treated him as one dead to them, and cast him out and trod upon him. I could give many striking instances of this, only it is unpleasant to recall them. I had occasion to trace many of them very carefully, and I found them all either pure inventions or quite distorted stories.

But turning to his manner of dealing with anxious souls, I should say that he acquired a holy skill in this, and also the exercise had the effect of teaching him how wonderfully the Bible was adapted to the varying phases of the human heart. As an illustration of his faithfulness let me mention the case of a lady in England who came to speak to him, but refused to begin their conversation with prayer, unless it were to read one of the collects, but not to pray as he did, as if God was really in the room listening; and again trying to stipulate with him that he should say nothing on a religion of blood, which to her was full of horror. Of course he told her that without the shedding of blood there was no remission of sin, and, after praying with her, he opened up the way of salvation through a crucified Saviour. Another lady who came to speak to him would not acknowledge that she felt any sense of sin or anxiety about her soul. To her he said, 'I perceive you are anxious, but you are a great deal too proud to let me know.' She felt she was in the hands of one who had discovered her inmost thoughts, and she told him everything. The result was the young lady's conversion —that of several other members of her family followed.

But it must not be supposed that this personal dealing was always an easy thing. For example, once when he was staying in London, he got a letter at breakfast from a lady at Torquay, with whom he was only slightly acquainted, telling him that she had a son in London, a Colonel int he Guards, and asking him to call on him and speak to him about his soul, giving him his name and address. Mr. North did not at first like this. He did not care to intrude

on a Colonel in the Guards whom he had never seen, and he knew the writer of the letter so slightly that he hardly felt called on to do it. Still he kept the letter in his pocket, and it was like to burn a hole there. At last he resolved that he would call on him, but he secretly wished that he might not find him at home. On reaching his door he rung the bell, and asked if Colonel A. was at home. 'Yes, sir, he is,' was the answer, and he walked in and found a tall, handsome man with a long beard, very fashionably dressed. He was just about to go out to the Park. His hat was on, and he was pulling on one of his lavender kid gloves. Mr. North began the conversation by saying, 'Colonel A., I have come to you on what you will think a strange errand. I am Mr. North. I had a letter from your mother yesterday morning, asking me to call on you and speak to you about your soul.' 'Oh, you are Mr. North,' said the Colonel, taking off his hat; 'pray sit down on the sofa. I had a letter from my mother, leading me to expect this visit.' They conversed for a while together, when Mr. North showed him the danger of being of the world, living with it and perishing with it; and also the only possible way of escape through Jesus Christ as the Saviour provided by God, and he urged him to leave the world and cleave to Christ. 'But,' said he, 'you must do this out and out, and don't be ashamed of it. Go to your club or to your mess, and tell them that you have changed masters.' The Colonel indicated that he was not prepared for this. 'I daresay,' said Mr. North, 'you shrink from it. You would rather lead a forlorn hope or brave any military danger. The confession, however, would not be so difficult as it seems at a distance. The lion is a chained one. I am myself a proof of this now. Yesterday morning I got a letter from a lady whom I scarcely knew, asking me to go to a Colonel of the Guards whom I had

never seen, and speak to him about his soul. If you had got such a message, you would not have liked it.' 'No,' he said, 'I should not.' 'Neither did I. If any one had come to me on such an errand a few years ago, I should have turned him to the door, and I expected that you would do so to me. But instead of that you have treated me like a gentleman, given me a seat on your sofa, and entered frankly into conversation with me, and I am ashamed of my timidity.' The Colonel afterwards came to hear Mr. North give an address in Willis' Rooms, but with what results I never heard.

After his conversion Mr. North once met Charles Kean, the eminent tragedian, with whom formerly he had been intimate, and to whom many thought he bore a striking personal likeness, and he wrote a note asking him to come and hear him preach, but Kean declined, saying, 'he could not if he would, and he would not if he could.'

In society Mr. North was rather quiet, and did not join much in general conversation, but he was fearless as a lion in rebuking any levity on religious subjects, or any approach to profanity or scepticism. He did not care who the offender might be, or what his position; he always checked it. But among those whom he knew intimately, and who were congenial with him, he was capital company, full of liveliness and spirit, quick at repartee, entered into a passing joke, even if the fun should be against himself, and told a story admirably. In his earlier years he had been fond of private theatricals, and was, I believe, no mean performer. Children he used often to amuse by his imitations of foreigners or well-known characters, and he always made himself a favourite of young people by his warm sympathy with them.

But it would be a mistake to suppose that his conversation was only light and sparkling; he was most in his element

in speaking of the Bible, and greatly loved to ponder over it with such men as Dr. Moody-Stuart, Dr. Charles Brown, or Dr. Andrew Bonar. At their feet he sat like a child, and delighted greatly in what they taught him.

He highly appreciated his fellow-labourers in the vineyard, enjoyed their society, and was gladdened by the tidings of their success. He was the first whom Mr. Grant of Arndilly consulted when that great lay evangelist began those labours which came to be so widely blessed. I have frequently met Mr. North at Arndilly, and very interesting it was to see what confidence and love the two had for one another.

Arndilly, and Huntly Lodge, the residence of the late Duchess of Gordon, were the two great places in the north where large meetings used to be held. Great reunions of Christians took place at both of them; men eminent for their piety and their gifts were often present from England, Ireland, America, and the Continent, but Mr. North was always welcomed among the foremost, his addresses being powerful and invigorating. Reginald Radcliffe of Liverpool was another of those who laboured much with him in his first days, and whose fast friendship was never interrupted till he helped to lower his sainted remains into the grave at the Dean Cemetery in Edinburgh.

Towards the close of his life he was gladdened by the wonderful blessing that attended the labours of Mr. Moody. That evangelist heard Mr. North speak in Glasgow, but only once. He was delighted with the sermon, said he should never forget it, and that he would make use of many of his thoughts. I had the pleasure of meeting them both together at Liverpool, and was greatly pleased to observe the interest which they felt in one another.

There were some who preferred Mr. North's ministrations at family worship even to those in the pulpit. They thought him less excited. And certainly he was often tender, solemn,

and striking in these small domestic gatherings. I remember once in a house where several had been asked to meet him, he began by opening the Bible and saying, 'None of you know where I am going to read to-night, do you?' There he paused. 'No, you don't, and you never will till I tell you. I am going to read in 1 Corinthians. But again you don't know what chapter.' A pause. 'I am going to read the 1st chapter of 1 Corinthians. Now you know, because I have told you. You did not find it out of yourselves. There was not one of you clever enough to do this; you only know because I have told you. And this is the principle upon which the apostle's argument in this chapter proceeds. He says, "The world by wisdom knew not God." None of the princes of this world knew that Jesus was the Lord of glory, or they would not have crucified Him. God was determined that no man should find Him out by his own wisdom. A few, not many wise men did find Him out, but not by their own wisdom. They had to become babes first, and then it was revealed to them; "but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."' He then proceeded to expound the first two chapters of the epistle in a very interesting and lucid manner.

After he had been labouring for several years as an evangelist with untiring exertion and without any pecuniary remuneration, some of his friends resolved to raise a sum sufficient to provide a home for him, where he might rest for part of the year, and where Mrs. North might remain while he visited different parts of the country. This seemed most desirable on her account as well as his. Hitherto she had always accompanied him. Her fine disposition, pleasing

manners, and remarkable abnegation of self, made her a welcome inmate in every house which he visited. Still it seemed hardly fair that she should be called on to lead a life entirely among strangers. A sum of upwards of £2000 was raised, and presented to him for this purpose.

When this was received, it naturally filled Mr. North with the deepest gratitude, which he expressed to his cherished friend, Dr. Moody-Stuart, in the following letter :—

'*Oct. 6th*, 1860.

'First let me thank God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for all His goodness and mercy to me. Since I first went to Him in prayer, what mercy and guidance and blessing has He not showered upon me. Some things (His greatest blessings probably) have not been in accordance with the desires of my natural man—but oh how few even these—while the blessings and friends and comforts that He hath given me have been marvellous. To Him then first be all the praise and the gratitude. And next let me thank you, dear brother, and the other friends who have so kindly and generously come forward to render by their aid my temporal position more comfortable. Will you convey to them one and all my sincere and heartfelt thanks? May the Lord look on their gift as given to Him, and reward them above all that I can ask or think exceeding abundantly into their own bosoms.'

He first purchased with it a house in the neighbourhood of Elgin, on the banks of the Lossie, surrounded by a piece of ground, which he laid out with great taste. This residence he greatly enjoyed for many years, after which he sold it and bought the lease of a small house in London.

Mr. North's custom was to reside at home in summer and autumn, or visit his friends for four months in the year, and during the other eight he went about preaching. He

generally remained for about a month at a time at each place. His services were so much sought after, that whoever wanted him had to invite him for a year or more before he could come to them ; and when he died in November, 1875, his list of engagements was completed up to the summer of 1877. But as he shewed his list to his friends at Ramornie, he said, 'I have booked myself for meetings with you in October 1876, that is to say, if I am alive, for we must always feel that our days are in God's hand.'"

REMINISCENCES BY THE REV. A. MOODY-STUART, D.D.

"'You are not the kind of man I'm in the habit of seeing,' was the thought that rose in my mind and almost to my lips, as my study door opened and a visitor was announced under the name of 'Mr. Brown.' 'Who is Mr. Brown?' was not just the thought that next occurred to me, for that was a question I had no hope of answering to myself, but what is Mr. Brown's occupation? what may be his character? and what can be his object in calling for me? 'A man of the world, yet not a man of the world,' was the nearest guess I could make, when the mystery was solved by Mr. Brownlow North giving his own name, for he saw that I was puzzled ; and the man before me did most exactly fit the associations I had attached to the name, as none else in the world could have done. Having heard that he was to be in Edinburgh, I had written to him, asking him to call on me ; but I was not expecting him at the time, and I welcomed him with equal surprise and delight. A year or two later he went with me to Huntly Lodge, and the Duchess of Gordon told me how greatly pleased and struck she was with the marked change in his countenance and bearing. He had formerly been in her house when he had shootings in the neighbourhood. She received him now in his Master's name on account of what she had heard from

others, and the change in his whole aspect gained for him at once the most cordial welcome, even before she had the opportunity of knowing for herself the truth of what she had greatly rejoiced to hear.

At that first visit in Edinburgh we both engaged in prayer, and alike in prayer and in conversation it was impossible not to be deeply impressed with his reverential awe, his earnestness, and his tenderness of spirit. Those who heard the masterly clearness of his theology, the decision of his statements, and the boldness of his address in the pulpit, could scarcely conceive how childlike he was in private, and how ready he was to listen to any teaching. To myself it was unspeakably refreshing to find a man with such a fear of the living God, such brokenness of spirit, and such faith in the everlasting Word. It was a great acquisition, and reminded me of the saying of the first convert under Dr. Kalley's teaching in the island of Madeira, where so many hundreds afterwards forsook all for the sake of the gospel, but where for a long time there was only one man converted, who after much patience came with a companion to his teacher, and said, 'I have found a man!' And on that day it seemed to me that I had found a man whom God was redeeming to Himself, was leading and instructing, and was sending as a skilful and faithful labourer into His harvest. From that day forward we were knit together in the bonds of a life-long friendship and affection. There never was a preacher who could more sincerely say, 'We believe and therefore speak.' It was what he believed for himself that he spoke to others, and he spoke it only because he believed it. He said to me, not then but afterwards, that he would like to go through the streets bearing a large board on his breast with such a text as this printed on it, 'The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

If he had been sure that it would do good, he was willing even to become such a fool for Christ's sake. Eternity was to him as great a certainty as time, and if equally certain, infinitely more important. One day, after coming from an Insurance Office, he told me that they had asked him if he knew anything that might shorten his life, and that he answered, 'Oh, yes, I feel that I may not live for an hour!' This was rather startling, but they desired him to return for a medical examination. After his second visit he said to me, 'Only think, Moody-Stuart, the doctor says that I may live till I am seventy, that is twenty years, and how many souls I may be the means of saving in that time!'*

The hand of the Lord was with him, and when he was reminded to make the most of Divine help while he had it, he thought it impossible that he could ever lose his vivid apprehension of things spiritual and eternal, or relax in zeal for his Redeemer and for the salvation of men. But when towards the close of his life he saw the Lord's hand with the American Evangelist, and his own work at the time but little in comparison, he said to me, 'This would not have been if I had persevered as I began.' In many respects, as well as in this, the defects and the faults which others saw in him were not unknown to himself, and he had an extreme frankness in owning them. Even to the most devoted ministers and members of the Church of Christ, these words of our Lord, 'Nevertheless thou hast left thy first love,' seldom fail to be spoken at some period of their course, and Mr. North learned that he formed no exception; but as with many others so with him, there was a gracious recovery.

In the midst of many things painful in the Church and in the world at this present hour, the materialism of science,

* Mr. North was spared to spend exactly twenty years in preaching the gospel.

the infidelity of literature, the growth of superstition and priestly dominion, nothing has occurred in Scotland either so startling or so distressing as the discovery of the lax hold with which the Word of God is retained by many religious men. But the whole written Word was for Mr. North both the bread of life for his own soul and the sword of the Spirit for piercing the armour of the unbeliever. For himself the Bible was his constant and only study, which he searched daily for hours from the day of his conversion till the day of his death; and his power with others lay in bringing home the very words of the Bible to the heart and conscience.

In so far as has fallen under my own observation, the fruit of his preaching has been more abiding than that of any other evangelist. In not a few instances known to myself, these conversions have stood the trial of twenty years, with much more than the average of Christian life and fruit. This is due in part to the great foundation the preacher laid in the Divine judgment, sovereignty, and law, as well as in mercy and love; but also, and in immediate connection with these great truths, it is perhaps even more to be ascribed to his unceasing reference to the word of the living God. The permanence of the conversions under the preaching of Mr. North has often recalled to my memory the words of an English minister in my church some time after the beginning of his work: 'I have seen many sung into conversion, but few of them stood; I have seen others prayed into conversion, and more of them stood, but many fell away; but I have seen those stand who were converted by the Word of God.'

In relation to the truths of God's Existence and Presence he often repeated and pressed that text, 'Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret.' It was not only 'thy Father seeth in secret,' but 'thy Father is in secret:' He will meet

you there, and you cannot be there without meeting Him, for He is there.

One night, in preaching to young men in St. Luke's Church, he had spoken with more than usual power from these words, and solemnly charged them all to go straight home and pray to Him 'who is in secret,' with the undoubting assurance of His presence in their closets, and of the certainty of His listening to their prayer. A few days afterwards a young man of perhaps twenty-two years of age called on me to express his gratitude for that sermon as the means of his salvation. Under the impression of the preacher's closing words, and with a deep sense of the nearness of the living God, he left the church with the fixed resolution of casting himself down on his knees as soon as he reached his room. But the house was at some distance, and as he walked through the silent and lonely streets in the dark night, he said within himself, 'Why need I delay so long? why need I go to my closet to find my Father who is in secret? Is He not here in this solitude, as much as there? and may I not find Him now as well as then?' And with the sense of God all around him he knelt down quickly on the cold and hard pavement, and did not rise from his knees till he found that God is near to all that call upon Him; and like the publican of old, 'he went down to his house justified' through faith in Christ Jesus.

It was impossible to know Mr. North without being bound to him with a cordial attachment. He was thoroughly a man, and in many qualities both of head and heart he was a great man. He was genuine, transparent, outspoken, sincere in his affections, and thoroughly free from all that was artificial in his religion. His talents were of a high order; and with his athletic frame and vast energy he was fitted to take a foremost position in any line of life he might have chosen. In everything he was extremely prac-

tical; and in religion he saw clearly what was great and solid, with even too little taste for the sentimental. He spoke to his hearers as in the transaction of a great business; and this practical dealing commended itself to the multitudes. From the time when eternal truths had broken in upon himself, as his own practical concern, he was borne forward with an inexpressible earnestness to communicate them to every living man whom his words could reach; and in his own special sphere no recent preacher has equalled him in vividness and power.

The spirits of just men made perfect are gathered around the throne of the Lamb: and it is a comforting thought, that together with the corruptible body the whole corruption of self, of earth, and of sin has been laid aside by them for ever. Eternity would be dark indeed, if our own unnumbered sins, and the defects of all whom we have known in Christ, were not finally left in quitting this earthly state. Some one has said that we ought to think of our Christian friends as we think and look upon the moon, in which it is not the spots that engage our mind, but the brightness and beauty of the shining orb which the spots cannot bedim. With a friendship all but incredible, our Lord Jesus Christ said of the twelve, with only one exception, 'They have kept Thy word,' which none of them would have said of themselves, nor any other would have pleaded in their behalf save Him, who gave His life for theirs. Peter, Thomas, and the rest have kept Thy word, because they have themselves been kept by the power of God; and so of us all, and of him of whom we have been writing, as numbered now with 'the spirits of just men made perfect.'

'Another old friend is gone,
Another familiar face;
Another has laid his burden down,
And finished the weary race.

See that the lamp burns bright,
For the way is dark and unknown;
None may aid us to gain the light,
The path must be trodden alone.

Patience! we stand and wait,
Till in trembling we rejoice,
And we pass the eternal gate,
At the sound of the Bridegroom's voice.'"

REMINISCENCES BY REV. WALTER ROSS TAYLOR, GLASGOW.*

Mr. Taylor, after narrating Mr. North's labours in his church in Glasgow in 1874, (see p. 425,) continues :—

"The blessing which rested on our beloved friend's labours in Kelvinside Church, not merely caused him the deepest joy and gratitude, but drew his heart to the place and the people in no common degree. It needed no importunity to bring him back, he came as though to his own home. And as on these occasions he was my guest, I had full opportunity of observing and knowing him as a man, as well as of estimating his power as an evangelist; and the impression which was more and more produced upon my mind was, that his was a truly great nature, large, loving, and lovable, in no ordinary degree. I came to understand how, on the one hand, when he was the servant of sin he was 'free from righteousness,' daring and reckless beyond many in the pursuit of his chosen pleasures; and how, on the other hand, when the grace of God had changed him, he entered on Christ's service with a burning zeal and devoted energy, which sent a thrill of quickening life through the length and breadth of Scotland. The secret lay in this, that he could not love by halves. Where he loved, he

* Just after Mr. North's death, an interesting and able sketch of Mr. North's labours appeared in the *British Messenger*, from the pen of Mr. Taylor.

loved, according to an expression of his own, with a 'big love.' There was no possible thing he would not do for those who had fully secured his affection; neither effort nor sacrifice would be grudged on their behalf. The impression of sternness which many drew from some of his discourses was largely mistaken; his strong and sometimes terrible statements were the result, not of severity, but of an overmastering sense of the reality of things eternal. No doubt he could be stern when he thought occasion required, and very decided too, for he had a strong will; but intimate acquaintance soon revealed that his nature, so far from being of hard material, was a very fountain of affection. Of this I saw various evidences to an extent which altogether surprised me.

Another thing which struck me was the degree to which he had escaped the danger of doing his work mechanically. As was to be expected, the number of his addresses was limited, more especially as many had been published as tracts and books; but familiar though he must have been with these addresses, his public appearances were to the last preceded by hours of private and prayerful meditation. On each occasion he was careful to enter thoroughly into the spirit of the subject selected, and to realize for himself the truths he was to proclaim to others. It was no case of reading off an old discourse, either from manuscript or memory, but the heralding of truths with which his own soul was in close and living contact. And this, coupled with the strength of emotional nature just referred to, explained a feature in his preaching which critical hearers often commented on unkindly; namely, his speaking occasionally through tears. It seemed to them an undue straining after effect; but those who knew the man were aware that the broken utterance with which he delivered his intenser thoughts was no trick of oratory, but the

natural expression of real and overpowering feeling. It was no studied effort meant to move weak women, but the homage of a strong nature to the power of Divine realities. Even in talking in a room quietly to one or two persons his emotion often overmastered him in this way. A lady recalling such a conversation writes: 'It is impossible to describe him as he spoke, but many who have known him must vividly recall him in those moments of intense and tearful earnestness, when words seemed all too weak to utter the heart.'

Perhaps a word may be fitly added as to Mr. North's mode of living, especially as the idea more or less prevailed, that in this respect he was peculiar and self-indulgent, and possibly this prejudice may still linger in some quarters, in connection with his memory. The idea arose partly from the unreserved frankness with which, when a guest, he stated what he wished. This habit was in a measure forced upon him. Like most other men whose health is infirm, he had his own little ways and preferences; and as his work involved frequent and lengthened residence from home, it of course became of considerable importance for him that these should be known and attended to. Discomforts which one might easily bear for a day or two become a very different matter if they have to be endured for weeks together; and hence a frankness as to small details, which in the case of a brief stay would have been out of place, was in his circumstances, if not necessary, at least wise. Besides this, however, the impression now referred to was still more largely due to his own sensitiveness about giving trouble, for this had led him into the custom of unreasonably calling himself a very troublesome guest. Many a time I reminded him that there are plenty of people in the world who have an easy, lazy way of accepting as true each man's estimate of himself: and

that if he went on saying that he was difficult to entertain, there were those who would readily believe him, and add their own seal to his testimony. But all who knew him intimately can testify that he was one of the most genial and delightful of guests, a man who brought sunshine and happiness along with him; while his kind and grateful manner so thoroughly won the regard of those whose duty it was to wait on him, that instead of regarding it as a trouble, they felt it to be a privilege to have the opportunity of doing him any service.

In short, the impression regarding Mr. North indelibly stamped on my memory and heart, by months of the most intimate and unreserved fellowship, was that of a broad-minded, large-hearted, genial, and gifted Christian man; whom I learned to reverence and love as a father. And mingling with these feelings there was the honour due to one whom God had raised up, and signally qualified to render a service to His Church in Scotland, of no passing nature, but of enduring importance, and fraught with incalculable results. Highly as I valued his later evangelistic labours, I was sensible that the special work of his life had been achieved some twenty years before, when he succeeded in obtaining for lay effort a place and an express recognition, such as it had never previously gained. It is this which secures for his name a lasting place in the religious history of our country. He takes rank, not merely as a successful evangelist, but as the father of evangelists in our day—as one who not merely took a prominent part in a great evangelistic movement, but may be truly called its leader and pioneer."

LAST DAYS AND DEATH.

"At last, not rotting like a weed,
But having sown some generous seed,
Fruitful of further thought and deed,

In a good cause, not in thine own,
Thou perish'd : wept for, honour'd, known,
And like a warrior overthrown." TENNYSON.

"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."—2 TIM. iv. 6, 7.

XIX.

MR. NORTH himself once laughingly quoted a friend's description of him as being not so far from the truth, that he was a big man, a big woman, and a big child rolled into one. If the great moralist's definition of a great man be correct, that a great man is not a man who has fewer weak points than the ordinary run of men, but a man who is stronger in his strong points, we may claim for Brownlow North the epithet of a great man. Or if we measure a man's greatness by the work he does, he assuredly was a man who did a great work, a work whose greatness and extent only the great day will fully unfold. Many complained that he evinced little sympathy for those who differed from him in his doctrinal views. There is some truth in this. It is a common defect in men of strong convictions, is by no means a monopoly of orthodox divines, and had his character been more faultless in this respect it would probably have been less forcible. As a rule he kept secondary questions in their secondary place.

In the twenty years of labour allotted to him in the great harvest field he did as much as most active men do in fifty years, and perhaps there is no one of his contemporaries to whom spiritual and vital

religion in Scotland owes more than to Brownlow North, if so much. He gave it an aggressive force and character which it was not exercising when he came forth as its herald, and under his leadership evangelical religion, instead of standing on the defensive, assaulted the strongholds of worldliness in all classes of society, from the highest to the lowest, with the most undaunted determination and success. The hour now came when his Master summoned him home from his labour to his reward.

His friend Mr. James Balfour writes:—

"For the last year or two of his life he was beginning to feel the fatigue of preaching more wearing out, and he suffered also from frequent attacks of rheumatism. During his last summer I spent some time with him at Keith Hall, where he paid an annual visit of about a month to the Earl and Countess of Kintore. In that house he had often been made the means of blessing, and there he was always cordially welcomed by the host and hostess, both of whom had been great and fast friends to him. During that visit we had much pleasant intercourse, sometimes walking through the fine grounds, and sometimes sitting in his own room, when all had retired to rest for the night. There we would ponder together over favourite or difficult texts, or devise schemes for promoting the Lord's cause, or not unfrequently talk of dying and the future state. Mr. North somewhat nervously shrank from the act of dying, but he would say, 'We are in the world, and must go out of it.'"

In the autumn he went to pay a long-promised visit to his friend Lord Polwarth in Berwickshire. They had first met at Haddo House at the close of 1862, just previous to Lord Polwarth's marriage to the Earl of Aberdeen's daughter; a memorable visit, the particulars of which are given in another part of this Memoir. They had occasionally met since, and Lord Polwarth writes, "When I saw him previous to Mr. Moody's visit to Glasgow, I thought him a good deal shaken in constitution, and no wonder, as I afterwards learned how he had often laboured on in positive bodily suffering. His quiet exposition of the Scriptures, especially the Psalms, used to be deeply interesting to me, the chief feature being striking thoughts expressed in strong terse language which stuck to one. I remember well at the house of a mutual friend in Edinburgh he was asked to conduct worship. He had not expected it and had not thought of it. He seemed for a moment perplexed, and expressing himself thus to me on the subject, I remarked, 'Yes, the Lord is with us;' whereon he promptly replied, 'Ah, but we are not always with Him.' Those who knew him well, who were with him in prayer, can testify to the fervent simple faith which he exercised in the living God, on whose Spirit he relied for all true result in his work. His prayers were very unadorned, very plain, very direct, and very humble. He never forgot what he was in himself, and his characteristic expression when speaking in prayer of himself was 'this poor sinner.'

He evidently was to the last deeply conscious of the marvellous grace which had called him out of darkness into light, and made him a chosen vessel for God's service. His prayerfulness was truly one secret of his power, no less than the constant study of the Word of God, which he thoroughly knew. His own call by the grace of God was a frequent subject of conversation, and was ever a vivid reality to him. The tears would start to his eyes as he spoke of God's goodness to himself, and he was ever under a sense of gratitude to the One who had loved him and washed him from his sins.

When he visited us in the autumn of 1875, we were at Humbie, where he spent a week with us, greatly enjoying himself in the woods, and taking a lively interest in the agricultural improvements going on. He was in particularly good spirits, and seemed to feel stronger. How little did we then think the end was so near! At a little Bible-reading in our house he met a gentleman who told him that he had been the means of spiritual blessing to a dear one many years before, who had lived and died a consistent Christian. Mr. North felt this very much as encouragement concerning work of years gone by. Possibly they are dwelling on all that now. He was very sympathetic in nature, and there was nothing which did not awaken his sympathetic interest. He was able to accompany us to Mertoun, where he stayed for another week, as bright and happy as before. Indeed, we look back to those days as a

time of peculiar joy and gladness in friendly intercourse with one who rejoiced in the Lord, and as His child in all that was lovely and of good report. There was nothing of gloom about him. He loved to see others happy. He went on Sunday to preach in the parish church of Kelso, which was largely filled. I fancied he had not his usual vigour, but he preached earnestly on a favourite passage. After the service an old man requested to see him, and informed me that Mr. North had been the means of his conversion eighteen years previously at Newcastle. This was another token of God's blessing on past work which gladdened his heart. I shall not forget the times of quiet spiritual intercourse which we were privileged to have together at that season. He left my house on October 20th, and that day fortnight he left the earthly house of the bodily tabernacle, to depart and be with the Lord."

"He was to begin his winter's campaign [Mr. Balfour continues] that year by holding meetings at Alexandria in Dumbartonshire; and during the time he was to be there, Mr. Campbell, of Tullichewan Castle, invited him to be his guest at his lovely residence on the banks of Loch Lomond, well known for two generations for the hospitality of its owners. When passing through Edinburgh, on his way there, he spent a night with us. We sat up pretty late in his bedroom, talking together of a great many things. I remember among others that we spoke of the uncertainty of the time of our dying, and he said, 'We

don't know how soon we may die, but no tongue can tell how important to us through eternity is the manner in which we spend the time, whatever it may be, till we die. Our eternity will all be proportioned to our lives on earth, so that everything we do till we die will be multiplied by eternity.'

He left us next morning for the West. As he was driving in a cab to the station, with a friend of many years' standing, he referred in his usual emphatic way to the Word of God. Miss —— said, 'Mr. North, you always send one back to the Bible,' when he replied, 'That's just it; there's nothing for any of us but the Bible.'"

The Vale of Leven Young Men's Christian Association had asked him to conduct services which they arranged for in the town of Alexandria, Dumbartonshire, and on the 21st October he became the guest of Mr. Campbell, of Tullichewan. On his arrival he was a complete stranger to the family, but his agreeable society and Christian conversation soon made him a general favourite. On the Lord's-day evening, the 24th, he preached in the Public Hall of Alexandria to a crowded and attentive congregation. About 1,200 persons were present, some of whom were able to remember the deep impression made by his earnest preaching in Alexandria sixteen years before, which had left behind it abiding and saving effects. His text on this his last Sabbath in the pulpit was Rev. xxi. 5—8, "Behold, I make all things new," etc. He preached for nearly an hour in

his usual pointed and searching style, but seemed to feel the effort, and asked the Free Church minister, the Rev. W. Sutherland, to announce and read the Psalms to be sung, which were the 100th Psalm, and the 67th paraphrase in two portions, which begins—

"Lo, what a glorious sight appears
To our admiring eyes!
The former seas have passed away,
The former earth and skies;"

and closing with the verses—

"Ho, ye that thirst, to you my grace
Shall hidden streams disclose,
And open full the sacred spring
Whence life for ever flows.

Bless'd is the man that overcomes,
I'll own him for a son;
A rich inheritance rewards
The conquests he hath won."

He preached in the Free Church on the Wednesday and Friday following.

The last address which he delivered was on this Friday evening before he was struck down with illness, and between 600 and 700 persons were present. He took for his subject the 86th Psalm, on which he commented throughout, making frequent and touching references to his own spiritual experiences. His meditations on this Psalm, transcribed from his Interleaved Psalm-Book, the reader will find at page 392 of this volume; and it cannot but lend an additional interest to these beautiful, penetrating, and instructive reflections to know that they form the

substance of the last testimony for his Master and his Master's truth, which this honoured servant was privileged to deliver to his fellow-men. He regarded preaching the everlasting message of God to man as the highest honour, as well as the greatest responsibility, that can be conferred on any child of God; in it he took the greatest delight, and the Lord permitted him to exercise his gift and grace to the very close of his life with unimpaired vigour, and to die in harness.

We extract the following account of this his first and last visit to Tullichewan from a letter from his kind hostess, Mrs. Campbell, dated 24th November, 1877.

"Mr. North came a stranger to us personally, in October 1875, and (although we did not altogether sympathise with his views on religious matters) he impressed us all as being a thoroughly earnest Christian. He never lost an opportunity of speaking for Christ, and indeed sought opportunities of speaking to people about their souls and eternity and Jesus Christ. He had a great impression of the horrors of sin, and of God's wrath, rather than of His everlasting Fatherhood and mercy, and spoke much of the awful punishment of sin.

We had a dinner party one night, to meet Mr. North. After the ladies left, he introduced the subject of religion, and spoke very impressively. We had some young people with us another night, when he did the same thing. He spoke of marriage, I

remember, and of the evil and sin of believers marrying unbelievers, and impressed some of the young people very much." Although Mrs. Campbell has not been able to furnish us with recollections of his exact remarks on this the last of those occasions when he spoke in a drawing-room on behalf of that Lord whom he had so zealously adored, loved, and served, we are able to give correct notes of his remarks on this very subject on another similar occasion, and introduce them here, as this may be regarded as in a sense his parting testimony. His advice was, "Never marry a man who you are not fully persuaded is a thorough, true Christian, and not only so, but one who has as high a standard of Christianity as yourself, and one whom you can respect, look up to, and lean upon. The wife is the weaker vessel, and the husband should be one to lead her and draw her on. She should not have to do this to him. Remember these words, 'Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?' Observe how Christ identifies Himself with His people, and also the children of this world with the wicked one. It was the sin that destroyed the old world when the sons of God intermarried with the daughters of men (Gen. vi. 4). Then 'the wickedness of man was great upon the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually, and it repented

the Lord that He had made man upon the earth.' It was also the sin that Nehemiah so strongly reprobated in the Israelites, after their return from captivity, when they had intermarried with the Ammonites, the people of Ashdod and of Moab. Nehemiah says, 'I contended with them, and cursed them, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.' And keep away from worldly acquaintances; that is the way these attachments are made, and then it is such a trial to break them off. The trial will come to you some day. No progress in religion can be made without a cross of some kind; sickness will come, death will come; but, then—to stand before your Saviour, face to face, and look up to Him, and say (Here he stopped from emotion at the thought of *seeing Him*)—You are *married* to Him, you are the bride of Christ. 'I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.' 'Be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God.' Is it not wonderful? beautiful?"

Mrs. Campbell continues: "On Sunday night he had preached a very arousing discourse upon the awfulness of sin, and of God's wrath, addressed to the unconverted. His two discourses on Wednesday and Friday were addressed more to the Lord's people. He was quiet, and spoke much of the blessedness of the Christian life. He said that week-night services

were generally gatherings of Christians, and he changed his style of preaching accordingly. He spent much of his time in his own room, and when he preached in the evening he did not appear till five o'clock, and when he returned from preaching went direct to his room. Preaching was a very great exertion to him. The doctor said from the state of his health he might have died at any time in the pulpit. Mr. North came to us a stranger, some of us prejudiced against him ; but he won all our hearts, and also won our belief that he was a sincere and earnest Christian.

"On the Saturday he was taken ill, our son-in-law, Major Gildea, was in the next room to him, and heard him fall, went in and found him on the floor, and got him to bed. The doctor hoped he would get better, and he was kept as quiet as possible. Mrs. North was sent for, and was with him immediately, and never left night or day till the solemn close." His illness came on on Saturday, the 30th October, and lasted ten days, terminating in his release from his labours and his suffering on Tuesday, the 9th November. As both heart and liver were seriously affected, the physician took from the first a gloomy view of the case ; but for a week he rallied occasionally, and in the bosoms of his anxious friends hopes alternated with fears. One of those who attended him afterwards told a stranger, who spoke to him on the concerns of his soul, that it was while watching by Brownlow North's dying bed that he was first im-

pressed with the fact that there was reality in religion. During his illness he had interviews with his attached friends, the Rev. Walter Ross Taylor and Mr. James Balfour. The latter, to whom he had addressed a letter the very evening he was taken ill, has furnished us with the following relation of his last intercourse with his old friend :—

"He was ill for only about ten days, and occasionally during that time he rallied so much that hopes were entertained that he might recover. But these hopes were extinguished on the eighth day, and I was telegraphed for on Sunday, to go and see him. I went by the first train on Monday morning, and arrived immediately after breakfast. On getting to the house I saw the doctor, who told me how hopelessly ill he was. I was then taken to his room, but he seemed, when I then saw him, to be very near death; and although I took his hand, I can hardly say that I thought he was conscious of my doing so. I remained at Tullichewan all day, and was well rewarded for staying. About four o'clock I returned to his room with Mr. Campbell, when I found him much revived and perfectly conscious. He first said a few tender words to Mr. Campbell, and I then drew near him, and took his hand, saying, 'Do you know me, North?' He looked up and with a smile pronounced my christian name. It was touching as he continued to hold my hand, to look on him lying there, like a weaned child, able to speak only in whispers, and slowly, and with an effort. He again

looked at me, and said very softly, 'Jesus came to me and said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," and up to this time He never has. But,' he added, 'I have been a beast.' I said, 'I have often thought that the verse on which I should like to die is, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."' 'That,' he replied, 'is the verse on which I am now dying. One wants no more.' I said, 'This dying is what you and I have often spoken of.' 'Often,' he answered. 'Have you peace?' '*Perfect peace,*' he said, with such meaning. I proposed to pray, to which he gladly assented. After a short prayer he wiped his moistened eyes, and I had to leave him. That was the last expression of his faith and hope. But a day before that he had said, 'I used to have a great terror of death, but that is quite gone from me; I have no fear of it now; I am resting on Christ.' He also at that time said to one standing by, 'You are young, in good health, and with the prospect of rising in the army; I am dying: but if the Bible is true, and I know it is, I would not change places with you for the whole world.' As I looked at him, he seemed like a great ship of war slowly entering the harbour, the sails all furled, the guns unshotted, the excitement and the perils of the voyage over, and the desired haven reached. The next day the gates were swung open, and he spent that first five minutes in heaven, of which he often used to speak, when he was wont to imagine that Christ would come to him, when He saw his amazement,

and say, 'Said I not unto thee, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see?'"

During his illness, while consciousness remained to him, his thoughts often turned to his friends. In his last will and testament, dated 2nd November, he says, "There are a few other dear friends to whom I should have liked to leave something if I had had anything. I leave them, however, my love, which heartily is, and has long been, theirs and their children's. May the blessing of the Lord be on them all! Let a copy of this sentence be sent to those named."

It was arranged that he should be buried in the Dean Cemetery, in Edinburgh, and that the funeral should proceed from the house of his friend Mr. Brown-Douglas. It is touching to notice that this distinguished servant of the Lord, whose delight for twenty years it had been to go from place to place preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, was struck down in the very midst of his loved work, died in the house of strangers, who received him and bestowed on him every attention that friendship could suggest for the sake of their common Master, and was carried to his grave from the house of an attached friend, to which twenty years before he had also come as a stranger on his great mission of preaching the gospel. The funeral was a private one, but many of his sorrowing friends met with heavy hearts to pay the last offering of respect and love to the dust of one from whose eloquent lips they had often listened to the soul-

stirring message which his Master gave him to deliver.

A portion of Scripture from the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians was read. The sorrowful company joined in singing the sixty-sixth paraphrase:—

> "How bright these glorious spirits shine!
> Whence all their white array?
> How came they to the blissful seats
> Of everlasting day?
>
> Lo, these are they from sufferings great,
> Who came to realms of light,
> And in the blood of Christ have washed
> Those robes, which shine so bright."

The effect was tender and solemnizing. It seemed to take us within the veil, and unite us with the worshippers there, of whom we felt assured he was now one, whose robes were washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. Touching and suitable prayers were offered by Dr. Moody-Stuart and Mr. Ross Taylor, in brotherly fellowship with the former of whom Brownlow North began in Edinburgh that public ministry which after an interval of twenty years he closed in Glasgow in intimate association with the latter. The congregations of both of these ministers will long bear evidence of the power and success of the faithful preaching of the everlasting gospel by those lips which were now sealed with the silence of death. The thoughts of all present rose to the great general assembly and church of the firstborn above, and to the ever-increasing company of the spirits of just men made perfect.

His body was silently laid in the tomb, beside the remains of his daughter-in-law, and doubtless many who were not present then have visited the spot since, and thanked God for the work of faith and labour of love of His departed servant.

A grey granite obelisk was erected by his friends in the Dean Cemetery, to mark the place of interment, and bears this inscription :—

"BROWNLOW NORTH,

ONLY SON OF THE REV. CHARLES AUGUSTUS NORTH,

Prebendary of Winchester.

BORN JANUARY 6TH, 1810; DIED NOVEMBER 9TH, 1875.

At the age of forty-four years he was turned from an ungodly life to serve the Lord ; thereafter he preached the Gospel with singular power, and was greatly honoured in winning souls to Jesus.

IN TESTIMONY OF THE LOVE AND RESPECT OF MANY FRIENDS."

The words that will rise unbidden into many hearts as they close this record of his labours, or visit the resting-place of his dust, are, "Well done, good and faithful servant ; thou hast entered into the joy of thy Lord !"

On perusing the short sketch of his labours in the *British Messenger*, already referred to, the Archbishop of Canterbury wrote to a friend, on 15th Nov., 1875, words that well express the feelings of very many. "We have been reading the account of Brownlow North which some one sent to us. He will leave a great blank among those for whom he laboured. No one could know him without seeing that his

heart and life were devoted to his Master's service, and that he burned to preach to others what he had found so precious to his own soul.

"A. C. CANTUAR."

Taking a retrospect of the great work accomplished by Brownlow North, and reflecting that two-thirds of his life were worse than wasted, some may be disposed to find fault with the Divine procedure, and argue that it would have been more suitable had this work been performed by one who had feared the Lord from his youth. To such objectors we retort with the inspired Apostle, "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" or with Beza, who, when a detractor threw in his teeth his early sins, replied, "Hic homo mihi invidet gratiam Christi" ("this man envies me Christ's grace"); or with Augustine, who answered a like objector thus, "The more desperate was my disease, the greater honour redounded to the physician who cured me." Indeed, we cannot better close this imperfect record of the life-labours of Brownlow North, than by again quoting from lines written on St. Augustine, to whose experience of Satan's sway, and of the power of Divine grace, that of Brownlow North bore a striking resemblance:—

"I lov'd Thee late, too late I lov'd Thee, Lord;
Yet not so late, but Thou dost still afford
Good proof that Thou hast borne, with winning art,
One sinner more upon Thy loving heart:
And may I prove when all this life is past,
Though late I lov'd, I lov'd Thee to the last."

The epitaph of one of the Lord's most distinguished servants in a still more ancient church may not unfitly, though "magno intervallo," be uttered from many a sorrowing yet thankful heart over the tomb of Brownlow North :—

"AFTER HE HAD SERVED HIS OWN GENERATION BY THE WILL OF GOD HE FELL ASLEEP."

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